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THE
HISTORY of SUNDAY SCHOOLS

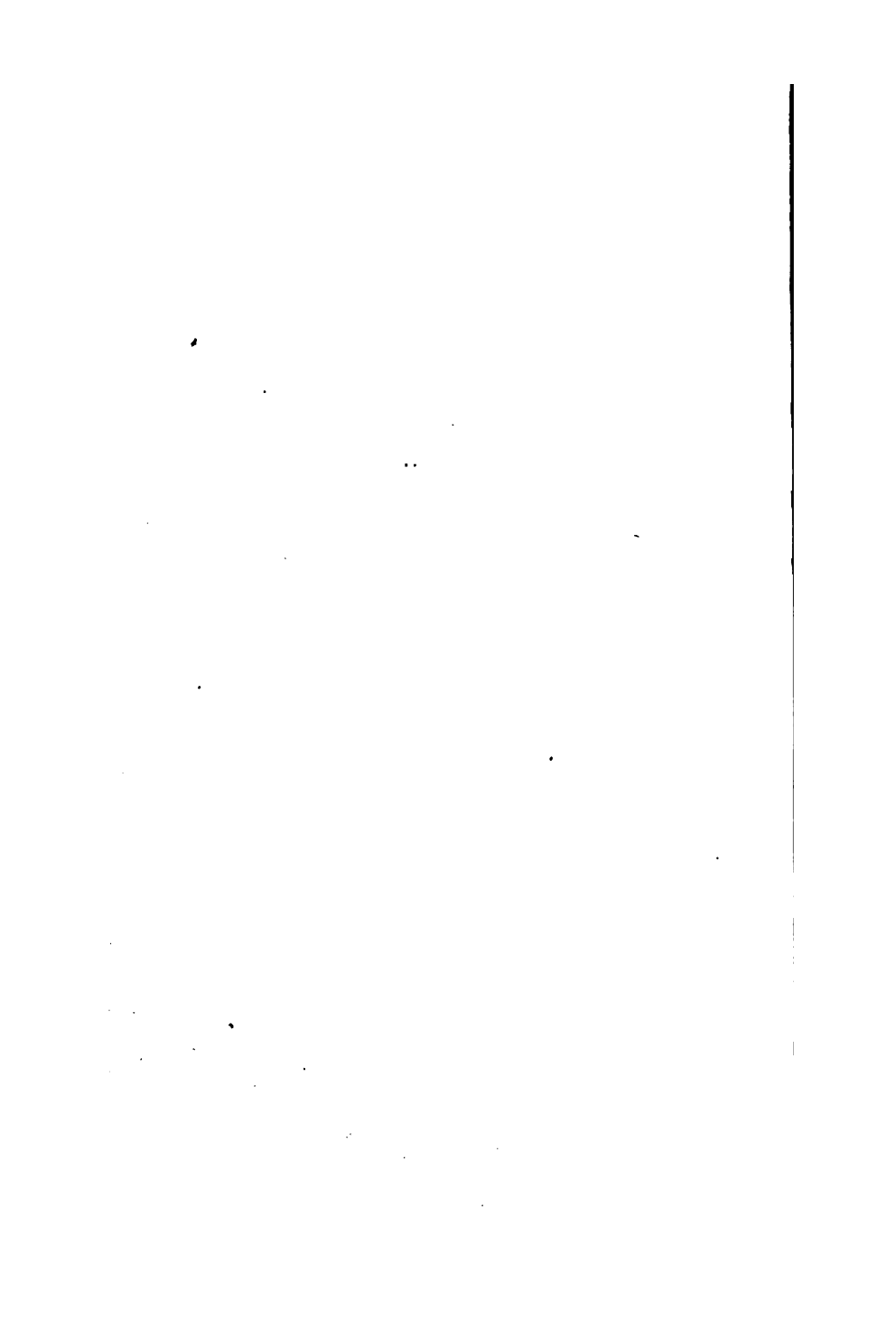


"Suffer little Children to come unto me"

Luke 9. 16.

BOSTON.
WM. CROSBY & H. P. NICHOLS.

No 111 Washington Street.



THE
HISTORY
OF
SUNDAY SCHOOLS,
AND OF
RELIGIOUS EDUCATION,
FROM THE EARLIEST TIMES.

By, LEWIS G. PRAY.

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1776
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TO THE
REV. SAMUEL BARRETT,
AND TO
THE PAST AND PRESENT TEACHERS
OF THE
TWELFTH CONGREGATIONAL SUNDAY SCHOOL,
WITH WHOM IT HAS BEEN HIS PRIVILEGE AND PLEASURE
TO BE ASSOCIATED FOR MORE THAN TWENTY YEARS
AS PARISHIONER AND SUPERINTENDENT,
THIS VOLUME
IS AFFECTIONATELY INSCRIBED BY
THE AUTHOR.

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HISTORY

OF

RELIGIOUS EDUCATION.

CHAPTER I.

INTRODUCTORY.

A "HISTORY of Education, Ancient and Modern," has been published, within a few years, by Professor H. I. Smith of Pennsylvania College. But this work, excellent of its kind, has for its chief, if not only object, the history of education in its intellectual bearings and character. But after much inquiry, I have been unable to find any work, which, in a like manner, has given a history of the religious education of the young from the earliest times.

Having been led, from a deep interest in the subject, to prepare a brief historical sketch of Sunday Schools, a few years since, which was published in a periodical of the day, and which is now enlarged and incorporated with this work, the want of such a history as that above described on my part was deeply felt. The questions were

continually arising, In what way, before the rise of Sunday Schools, did the young obtain a religious education? Has there been, in the past ages, any general or sufficient means, by schools or otherwise, for the accomplishment of this end? And if any, to what extent, and with what effect?

To answer these questions, and to give a brief history of Sunday Schools, has been the object in writing the following pages. The materials for such a work are few, for history in past times, in its eagerness to trace the policy and intrigues of courts, the conflict of arms, and the rise and fall of empires, churches, and sects, has devoted but few of its pages to descriptions of domestic life or fire-side scenes, — and less to accounts of universities and common schools, and the means of religious education, whether for the young or the old. And the few which have been written are scattered up and down in ancient works, not easily accessible in their original forms except to the antiquarian or learned scholar.

In the following pages, however, an attempt has been made to embody the few materials and facts which have been or could be gleaned on this subject from the histories of the heathen world and of the Christian Church. The writer

acknowledges his large indebtedness in this undertaking to the works of Mosheim, Neander, and Gieseler, of Jahn and Calmet, to Hallam's History of the Middle Ages, to Jamieson's Manners of the Primitive Christians, to Smith's History of Education, to a number of encyclopædias and dictionaries, literary and ecclesiastical, to the Christian Examiner, and to many English and American Sunday School magazines.

In the preparation of this work, accuracy and brevity have been kept constantly in view, rather than fulness, completeness, or originality. It would have been easy and interesting to have enlarged and dwelt upon the materials; but it was thought to be a wiser and more useful course to bring out the most important facts prominently and within the narrowest compass, than, by a more particular enumeration and greater detail, to incur the danger of distracting the attention and wearying the patience of the reader.

The object of this work will be fully attained if its perusal shall increase or confirm the faith of any in the benefits which are likely to arise from the continuance and extension of Sunday Schools and religious education in general. And I am persuaded that this, however imperfectly executed, must be its legitimate and necessary

effect.. For if, by the facts here collected, it shall be ascertained that the testimony of the past is, that the education of the young has been in all ages and everywhere neglected, — that their intellectual, moral, and religious natures have been left, for the most part, entirely uneducated, — that no systematic or general means have been provided for the culture of their minds or hearts, — it can no longer be a cause of wonder or surprise, that the world has improved no faster, nor that Christianity has made no greater progress towards its final and beneficent consummation. And it may well serve to create a sanguine hope, that if, in future, the Sunday School shall be properly sustained, and its boundaries adequately enlarged, so as to embrace not the few only, but all, — that if, by its influence, Christian parents shall be led to do their part more faithfully in watching and guiding the opening faculties of their offspring, — and if common schools shall be generally established and conducted by teachers who shall carry to their work a love of Christian truth and duty, — then a great revolution in feeling and action, in principle and conduct, may reasonably be anticipated, and Christianity obtain for herself an extended, if not a universal, empire over the minds and hearts of men.

CHAPTER II.

PATRIARCHAL EDUCATION.

FROM a very few incidents and allusions scattered over the earlier pages of the Bible, — that most ancient and divine of all books, — we are to glean all that can now be known of the nature and degree of education in the infancy of our race.

From this source we conclude that all government at that period was patriarchal, or paternal, in its character. All were then, as it were, of one family; and he who, as their common ancestor, by his age, wisdom, and virtues commanded the highest reverence and esteem, was selected by his kindred to preside over and govern the whole. Abraham was such an one, and Job and Jethro may be mentioned as instances of a like kind. They were kings in every thing, perhaps, but the name. "Thou art a mighty prince among us," said the children of Heth to Abraham. They were responsible to no higher authority, and were absolute in power, as well

as chief in command over their families, kindred, and domestics. They received universal homage and respect for their wisdom and age.

At this period, so far as we can now learn, there were no schools nor teachers by profession. The Patriarchs themselves were the only educators of their kindred and race; and the nature of their instruction was such as grew out of the circumstances by which they were surrounded, and the duties and exigences of the age in which they lived. At that time, but little knowledge had been accumulated, and as the art of writing was then unknown, that little, as a matter of necessity, was communicated by oral teaching in the ordinary intercourse of every-day life.

Their habits and manners exhibit at this time a beautiful picture of inartificial life.

The first object of patriarchal education and solicitude was to train up all their children to habits of untiring activity and industry. As their flocks were their principal treasures, so their sons and daughters were early and carefully instructed in the duties of the shepherd's life. For this employment peculiar care and skill were requisite. The removal of their flocks was necessarily very frequent; and it required knowledge and experience to do this successfully. They needed protection from beasts of

prey, to be restrained from wandering, or brought back to the fold, and driven day by day with unceasing vigilance and care. For, as stated by the author of Genesis, "if men should overdrive them one day, all the flock would die," especially the young, who required the tenderest and most constant watchfulness and oversight. This whole duty is graphically delineated by the poet when he says, —

"Thus the good shepherd tends his fleecy care,
Seeks freshest pasture, and the purest air;
Explores the lost, the wandering sheep directs,
By day o'ersees them, and by night protects;
The tender lambs he carries in his arms,
Feeds in his hand, and in his bosom warms."

At times, the Patriarchs themselves tended and watched over their flocks, but for the most part their superintendence was made the business of their sons and daughters, after careful instruction and long practice. It was an employment, therefore, in no sense degrading; but on the contrary, if faithfully performed, one of honor and distinction. Thus, Jacob, for many years, tended his uncle Laban's flock, and Moses, the renowned lawgiver, followed it for many years as an honorable vocation. Rachel from her earliest childhood gracefully and without reproach encountered all the fatigues and dangers attendant upon a pastoral life.

Their wells were few in number, and far apart, and in those days the care of them was an occupation of much importance, and to which the daughters of the Patriarchs were early trained. An only daughter of one of their number, Rebekah, was thus instructed and employed; and the ease and grace with which, as related by the sacred historian, she performed the duty when she gave drink to Abraham's servant and his flock, indicate the thorough training which she had received in this primitive occupation.

"And it came to pass, before he had done speaking, that behold, Rebekah came out with her pitcher upon her shoulder. And she went down to the well, and filled her pitcher, and came up. And the servant ran to meet her, and said, Let me, I pray thee, drink a little water of thy pitcher. And she said, Drink, my lord. And she hastened, and let down her pitcher upon her hand, and gave him to drink: And when she had done giving him drink, she said, I will draw water for thy camels also, until they have done drinking. And she hastened, and emptied her pitcher in the trough, and ran again unto the well to draw water, and drew for all his camels."

These Patriarchs, while engaged in tending their flocks, must have had their attention con-

stantly attracted to the beautiful objects of nature about them, — the plants, flowers, insects, and birds, by day, and the varied and glowing orbs which were rolling in grandeur and beauty above them, by night ; and the knowledge which by these means they were constantly accumulating was communicated as they had opportunity to their children and families, and thus transmitted to their remotest descendants. And we have reason also to believe, that they acquired early the art of speaking both gracefully and well. This we infer from the eloquent address which Judah made to his brother Joseph, and the ingenious plea of Abraham in behalf of the destined city of Sodom. From these and other specimens which have come down to us, it requires but the exercise of a little imagination to suppose that they gave their children more or less of instruction on this subject, — an accomplishment so necessary in all their negotiations with other tribes, being at this period their only means of intercommunication.

But we turn from these and minor points, to speak more particularly of the kind and amount of religious instruction which was given to the young in those early days.

These Patriarchs, as we find, acted not only as princes or kings, but officiated in their fami-

lies as priests, and were the only instructors of their children and kindred in the duties and offices of religion, whether idolatrous or otherwise. In some cases, as with Job, this duty was performed with great fidelity, of whom it is said, that after a series of domestic festivities in which his own children were chiefly concerned, he "sent and sanctified them; and rose up early in the morning, and offered burnt offerings according to the number of them all. For he said, It may be that my sons have sinned, and cursed God in their hearts." This was probably a daily domestic service, for it is added, "Thus did Job continually." But Isaac seems in some measure to have neglected the religious education of his children, as he was partial to one child, while he slighted the other. Jacob, again, was brought up with little or no knowledge of the true God, but when he had arrived at manhood and became instructed in the knowledge of divine truth, he was careful to exercise a strict paternal authority, and compelled his household — his wives, domestics, and children — to give up "their strange gods," and to worship Jehovah, in whom he then believed.

These Patriarchs, by custom or divine authority, were empowered to pronounce upon their children a blessing or a curse. Obedience secured

the one, and disobedience brought down upon their children the other. This power to bless or to curse was regarded as a high and valuable prerogative, and one of their most efficient means for securing that filial submission and regard without which any system of education is imperfect, and comparatively of little value. They were further empowered to disinherit their children, to expel them from their homes, and even to put them to death, if their misconduct was such as to justify either the one or the other. Ishmael, as we know, was "cast out" — that is expelled from the paternal home — for his improper conduct toward his mother. Indeed, the duty of filial and religious reverence is so distinguishing and beautiful a trait in the character of this primitive people, that it must have been taught and enforced, both early and late, by precept and example, by persuasion and power, on the part of all those who were engaged in their training and education. The approbation of Heaven was seldom withheld when these Patriarchs, in the wise exercise of their authority, enforced the commands of God, and endeavoured by all wise means to impress the value of religion upon the souls of those who were placed by Providence under their superintendence and care. How strikingly is this truth

illustrated in the case of Abraham! Just before the destruction of Sodom and Gomorrah, that event was expressly revealed to him, — and the reason assigned for it was, “*I know him*,” said Jehovah, “that he will command his children, and his household after him, and they shall keep the way of the Lord, to do justice and judgment.” Or, in other words, this revelation was made to Abraham, for the reason, that in afore-time he had exercised a benign and salutary influence in the religious training and education of his children; and therefore there was just reason to believe, that in time to come he would teach them the religious meaning of this direful calamity, and consequently they would “keep the way of the Lord, to do justice and judgment.”

CHAPTER III.

JEWISH EDUCATION.

THE extent of Jewish education, whether considered in its physical, intellectual, or religious character, was circumscribed and partial; less so, however, in its religious aspects than in either of the others. So far as we have now the means of ascertaining, it was the education of the family. For the most part, their children were brought up and educated in its bosom; and, situated as they were, this, upon the whole, must be regarded as a highly favorable circumstance. They had no public or private schools, with the single exception which will be the subject of our next chapter. It was not uncommon, indeed, for individuals of rank and wealth to employ others to assist them in the important work of education. David, for instance, had governors or instructors for his sons; and the education of Solomon was intrusted to Nathan. But in general, so far as the young received any direct or indirect instruction or culture, their parents were their only teachers.

In infancy, their children of both sexes were exclusively under the care of the mother ; — the sons to the age of five years, — the daughters from their birth to the period of their marriage. Under these circumstances, their female children were restricted in their education to a very limited range of subjects and employments. Watched over with very great maternal solicitude and care, they were seldom permitted to leave the precincts of home, except occasionally, on some errand of mercy or charity, or with an urn to draw water from some not-far-distant well. At home, they were occupied, for the most part, in acquiring a knowledge of those few arts or domestic accomplishments which in every age and country have been regarded as the most becoming and useful for their sex. The use of the spindle and the distaff, for the manufacture of tapestry and tents, linen girdles, and family garments ; the skilful preparation of their daily meals ; the "looking well to the ways of the household," — these were the essential branches of their education, and their most constant employments. Beyond this, by the general arrangements of the Jewish household, and from the mother's natural religious and moral sensibilities, they were trained up with care to habits of cleanliness, modesty, and piety. In the higher

ranks of life, however, the female children were generally relieved from all attention to domestic affairs and occupations, but were more closely confined at home, received a less amount of moral and religious culture, — while to dress, sing, dance, and give reception to their visitants, occupied the most of their time.

The sons, after the age of five years, came more immediately under the father's care, whose duty it was to see them instructed in some calling or trade, — his own generally, or some other ; but especially in all the memorable events, the sacred usages, and religious requirements of the land. In the book of Deuteronomy we find this duty enjoined in these words : — “ And when thy son asketh of thee in time to come, saying, What mean the testimonies, and the statutes, and the judgments, which the Lord our God hath commanded you ? Then *thou shalt say unto thy son,*” &c. Or, as the same duty is enforced again in the same book, “ Therefore shall ye lay up these my words in your heart, and in your soul, and bind them for a sign upon your hand, that they may be as frontlets between your eyes. And *ye shall teach them your children,* speaking of them when thou sittest in thine house, and when thou walkest by the way, when thou liest down, and when thou risest

up." This duty was also impressed upon them by their prophets and wisest men. Solomon exhorted them to "train up the child in the way it should go, and when it is old it will not depart from it." He farther declared to them, that "the glory of the children was their fathers"; and he exhorted the children to heed their instruction, "As a wise son maketh a glad father, but a foolish son the heaviness of his mother." The national religious motto was, "The fear of the Lord is the beginning of wisdom."

The children of this people, as a general rule, were under the protection of law; but from the earliest times, parental authority was nearly unrestricted. The use of the rod, or other means of coercive punishment, — the rod standing as a symbol of that idea, — was very general and common among them; and rigid discipline was exacted of parents as a duty. The love, respect, and obedience which are due to parents were clearly and prominently recognized by their fundamental laws, and parental authority was made coextensive and stringent. If a disobedient or refractory son was denounced and convicted before the elders of a city, he received the sentence of death. To strike or curse a parent was a capital offence. These are tokens

and proofs of a barbarous people and an uncivilized age, but probably such means, at that period, were more necessary than we can now well imagine. At four years of age they were taught the alphabet; at five they could read, and the Scriptures, that rich storehouse of heavenly wisdom, was their constant book of study, or the one from which they were constantly receiving oral instruction of the highest value. The observance of the ceremonial law was strictly enforced, which secured external purity, a wholesome diet, and a good moral influence. Reverence, as among the Patriarchs, was taught as a religious duty, required and sanctioned by divine law. At twelve years of age, they went up, in company with their parents, to Jerusalem, to attend their great national festivals, at which time they were instructed and trained in a course of public religious exercises, the only one provided for them by the Mosaic or their national code. ✓

Such was the general course of education and religious culture among the Jews. But as the parents themselves, for the most part, were exceedingly ignorant and uncivilized, we are not to suppose that any great amount of instruction was imparted to their children even on sacred subjects. Nevertheless we must regard it as an important point, and one which undoubtedly ex-

erted a highly favorable influence, that the religious education of their children was commanded them by divine authority, not only as they sat in their houses, and as they walked by the way, but also when they were about to lie down at night, and when they arose in the morning, — the first, the last, the constant duty of every day.

The Jews had one class of schools among them, of which we shall attempt to give some account in the succeeding chapter.

CHAPTER IV.

THE SCHOOLS OF THE PROPHETS.

THE origin and history of these schools, of which so little is generally known, may be stated in a few words.

It was natural to expect, that, among a people like the Jews, as among every people, there would be some, if not many, parents, who, as wealth increased and civilization advanced, would desire for their sons a better education than they themselves were competent to give.

Now, as the tribe of the Levites, those who were set apart as their priests, were their most learned men, so they were the most likely to engage in the business of instruction. It was therefore perfectly natural, that those parents who desired to obtain for their children this higher degree of learning should look to this class for aid and assistance. And hence the origin of these schools.

In the first instance, a few children only were sent by such parents to some one or more of these

prophets or priests for instruction. But as their number gradually increased, it led in time to the establishment of one or more regular schools.

A school thus formed is referred to undoubtedly in the First Book of Samuel, situated near the holy tabernacle. Samuel, when quite young, was placed and educated at this school, received while there a call from Heaven, and became a prophet of the Lord.

Previously to this time, according to Jahn, "there had been many other schools of this kind, which had fallen into discredit, but which were restored again by the prophet Samuel, after whose time the members of the seminaries in question, who were denominated by way of distinction the *Sons of the Prophets*, acquired no little notoriety."

One of these seminaries was at Naioth, a suburb of Ramah, where Samuel lived; another was at Bethel; another at Gilgal, and others, perhaps, at Jericho and Jerusalem. It is supposed that others, not very dissimilar in their character, were at different periods, situated at Shiloh, Carmel, Gibeah, and Gilead, where prophets resided.

There is but little known in regard to the names or character of the teachers who presided over these institutions; but "it is pretty

evident," says Dr. J. P. Smith, "from various intimations, that some eminent persons, such as Samuel or Elijah, presided over them, and undertook the charge of communicating instruction to these young persons." From other authorities which have been consulted, it would seem that the names of Samuel, Ahijah, Elijah, and Elisha appear conspicuously as the presidents or head teachers of these Jewish seminaries of learning.

The studies in these celebrated schools were poetical composition, psalmody, some of the sciences and useful arts; but chiefly, the laws and institutions of Jehovah.

Among the ancient Israelites it was a common practice in seasons of worship to chant their prayers and praises, accompanied by instruments. This music was a source of high national enjoyment, and the taste for it, probably, was perfected, if not formed, at these schools. Those who resorted to them for instruction were carefully and constantly exercised in singing, in metrical composition, and the art of sacred poetry. In all probability many of those sacred and sublime psalms generally ascribed to David and others, and which are in use by us even to this day, had their origin at these places.

This portion of their studies, it is believed, will serve to throw much light on many passa-

ges of Scripture, without which it would be difficult to understand them. This singing or chanting by the whole school is called in the Scriptures *prophesying*; as when Saul sent messengers to arrest David, who had taken refuge in the school at Ramah. The narrative says, "And when they saw the company of prophets prophesying, and Samuel standing as appointed over them, the spirit of God was upon the *messengers* of Saul, and *they also prophesied*"; —that is, united with Samuel and the whole school in the recitation or chanting of some sacred composition in praise of the wisdom and wonderful works of Jehovah.

So again, when Saul "went thither to Naioth in Ramah, and the spirit of God was upon him also, and he went on, and prophesied; until he came to Naioth in Ramah," where David was, and the people put the question, — "Is Saul also among the prophets?" — they did not mean to ask, whether he was an inspired messenger of God in the highest meaning of the word prophet, but, as he was seen prophesying or chanting in their company, whether he had joined himself to this school, and in a like manner. In this kind of prophesying or chanting the whole school were initiated and constantly practised. By this means much sacred thought and wisdom was

committed to memory, made popular by recitation, and widely diffused. From these and other circumstances, the pupils of these schools were called the *Sons of the Prophets*; a phrase in Hebrew synonymous with youthful prophets, or scholars of the Prophets. There is reason to believe, also, that they received instruction at these schools in some of the sciences and useful arts, such, more especially, as would prepare them for public employments in the Jewish kingdom; and thus, as Dr. Smith remarks, "give them opportunities for communicating religious instruction which otherwise they would not have had." From the interesting fact mentioned in the Second Book of Kings, where the little captive maid expresses the wish that her master Naaman might go to the prophet in Israel that he might be cured, it has seemed probable to some, that the prophets studied medicine at these schools, and practised it among their countrymen.

But the study of the laws and institutions of Jehovah was the great object of these schools. Not so much to make their pupils seers, or prophets, in the highest acceptance of the latter term, as to impart to them such a measure of divine truth and heavenly wisdom that they might become the successful teachers of the same

to others. In addition, they were taught to be simple in their wants; to cultivate hospitality; to be obedient and affable to their superiors; to engage much in study and prayer; and at the same time to labor with their hands, and to give proper attention to their humble and more secular concerns. Thus prepared, it would be in perfect accordance with divine wisdom, if, like Samuel, some of their number should receive a heavenly call, and become the inspired messengers of the Most High God. But in general it was their design to educate and prepare their pupils to become the scribes, the rulers, the law-givers, the judges, the lights and guides of their age.

At certain times it was customary for the head teacher or prophet to hold a public service, upon which all devout persons who pleased were permitted to attend.

In the days of Elisha, these seminaries were held in high estimation, and the number of their pupils was greatly increased. At Gilgal they were obliged to enlarge their establishment by the erection of new buildings; and it speaks well for their humility and industry, that its head master, Elisha, with his pupils, resorted to the woods, and felled with their own hands the timber with which to erect their new dwellings.

It may be well to add, that these schools were considered holy and privileged places. The Philistines dared not disturb them; and it was in one of them that David, in company with Samuel, found a temporary asylum from the vengeance of Saul.

These are the only schools, of which we have any knowledge, that existed in ancient times among the Jews. They resembled in some respects, probably, our own Theological Schools. At best, they were designed to educate but the few, leaving therefore the great mass of Jewish children without other than that domestic instruction which we have attempted to describe in the previous chapter.

CHAPTER V.

HEATHEN EDUCATION.

IN attempting a very brief account of the character and condition of religious education among the ancient heathen nations, we begin with the *Hindoos*. They; we are led to think, were among the earliest people who attained to any considerable degree of civilization. There can be no doubt that the religious education of their children engaged, to some extent, their careful attention. It made a part, it seems, of their belief, that sin committed by the father could be cancelled or atoned for by the religious exercises and good deeds of the son. And this, it is urged, was a strong impelling motive, and created among all parents an ardent desire to give their children the highest degree of moral and religious culture of which they were capable.

But among a people whose leading religious theories were those of pantheism, metamorphosis, and metempsychosis, — whose principal cere-

monies and acts of worship were visits to their pagodas, ablutions, purifications, sacrifices, — including even the offering of their own children, — penances, and mortifications, — where nothing natural was regarded as obscene, — we may safely infer, that, however earnest or able, parents could do little for the moral and religious culture of those committed to their care.

Little is known of their early systems or modes of education, but that little authorizes us to say, that it was limited for the most part to parental and domestic instruction. At this day, however, there is found amongst them a class of schools, few in number, the principal object of which is, to educate the sons of the Brahmins to become the future priests and sages of the land. As these schools bear the marks of that antiquity which is claimed for them, we may safely conclude, that, like the Jewish Schools of the Prophets, they were the early and only schools of the Hindoos for the religious education of the young. They do not now exceed, and probably never have exceeded, two or three in number for the whole kingdom. Children of the more wealthy or distinguished classes are allowed to attend upon them ; but, unlike the other pupils, their instruction is confined wholly to secular knowledge.

Education among the *Egyptians* was, for the

most part, domestic in its character. It was peculiarly so in the families of the priests. Their wives, as we are told, were uniformly and highly educated; and, having no inconsiderable degree of leisure, they employed it, to a great extent, in the education of their children. It is pretty certain that the Egyptians had many common schools in their dominions; but, so far as we can learn, no provision was made for the general religious instruction of their rising generations.

They had, however, three institutions for the education of a priesthood,—one at Thebes, one at Memphis, and one at Heliopolis. Their pupils—all of whom, probably, were young men—were divided into two classes; those who were expressly designed for the priesthood, and those who were not. The former class only were initiated into the mysteries of their national religion. As Moses “was instructed in all the wisdom of the Egyptians,” he probably was a pupil of one of these schools. The priests were their only teachers.

Among the *Babylonians* there was a single school for the training and culture of their Magi or priests. The number of its pupils was about seventy, divided into four classes, under the direction of the Grand Magus. Their studies

were history, — natural and civil, — astronomy, and mathematics. This people were given over to idolatry and all its abominations. They “sacrificed their male children to idols, and the innocence of their daughters in the pyramid of Belus.” Sometimes, we are told, “they tied their children in a sack, and, exclaiming that they were not human beings, but beasts, hurled them from the rock on which the temple stood.” Among such a people, there was little or no motive either for intellectual or religious culture, and therefore we should look for it among them in vain.

The *Chinese*, as all know, are an exceedingly ancient as well as peculiar people. Their national seclusion, which is one of their peculiarities, has deprived us of the necessary materials by which to judge of their condition as an intellectual or a religious people. One thing, however, is certain, that learning and intellectual culture is held by them in high esteem. Among them, it is learning and talent, more than wealth or any other external influence, which secures office and determines rank. But of their religion, if they have any, or of their modes of religious education, we are left wholly in a state of ignorance. Filial affection is their most striking moral trait of character, which is early and ear-

nestly inculcated and deeply cherished ; and, with reverence for their ancestors, seems to be the sum and substance of their religion.

The *Persians*, if we may believe the writings of Xenophon, at a period in their history about five hundred years before the Christian era, seem to have provided themselves with a very perfect and extraordinary system of education. Its object was, by a general system of moral education, to *prevent* the inclinations of the people from a tendency to vice, and the perpetration of wicked and evil deeds. It was designed to embrace the whole people ; but it excepted apparently those children whose labors were needed for the daily support of their parents, and, to a certain extent, young men who had entered the marriage state. Except these, the whole male population were divided into four classes ; namely, the boys, the young men, the middle-aged, and the old. From the latter two classes were taken, by selection, the teachers of the former two. The main object of this system was moral instruction. It is said, for instance, "that the boys attend the school, where they are employed in *learning justice* ; and they declare that they go for this purpose, just as with us they go to school in order to receive elementary instruction." Their governors or teachers spent the greater part of every

day in sitting in judgment upon any of their number charged with theft, violence, fraud, or slander, as the case might be, and, if found guilty, inflicted the punishment prescribed. Ingratitude was considered as the germ of all baseness, and punished severely, as a crime. With great care, the boys were taught self-government or temperance, and obedience to magistrates, both of which were enforced by the example and precepts of the aged, and by their immediate teachers, whose lives were such as to be in perfect accordance with their principles. Their only diet was bread, vegetables, and water. These were brought from their homes, with a goblet, to be used at the school-house or their usual place of meeting. At the age of sixteen or seventeen, they were advanced to the class of young men. The latter in their turn had their duties and peculiar course of training, and the aged theirs. But a further description of this system would take us far beyond the object of this work. It was certainly admirable in itself, and worthy of all imitation so far as it made provision for the education of the moral nature and faculties of the child at an early period, and had for its chief end the prevention of vice and the moral culture of a whole people.

We think it worthy of record here, as we have

found it stated on good authority, that among the institutions of Charondas, the legislator of *Thuringia*, established, as we are told, on the ruins of Sybaris, there was a provision in favor of education which stands unique among all the ancients. "Masters," it was ordained, "shall be established and supported at the public expense, and every male child shall be taught to read and write."

Among the *Grecians*, education in general was carried to a higher degree of perfection than with any other people. But it was secular, physical, ideal, and warlike in its character, rather than moral or religious.

The Spartans, under the system of Lycurgus, educated their children for the first seven years at home, and trained them to a great power of endurance by a severe system of dieting and physical exercises. After their seventh year, the male children were surrendered for public instruction, and were continued under it for thirty years. Conversation at table was one of their favorite modes of instruction. They were taught profound reverence for the aged, and implicit obedience to superiors; to think clearly, to judge correctly, to speak truly, and to express themselves briefly. Honesty seems to have had but little of their regard, as it was *detection* that con-

stituted the crime, and not the *act* of stealing. Bodily vigor, ruddy health, unyielding self-government, "love of country, and a certain sort of piety," was, in general, the result of this course of training. Much of this was attributed to the public teacher, but more to the influence and training of the parent.

In the other Grecian states, education, we may say in general, for it varied much at different periods, was left more free than among the Spartans. Its two objects were the *body* and the *mind*. For the first, which was regarded as of the highest importance, the Gymnasiums were provided, where a great number of athletic exercises were practised. Besides these, they had their Pythian, Olympic, and Isthmian prizes, bestowed upon those who were most successful in wrestling, running, &c. For the second, they had buildings separate from, and inferior to, the Gymnasiums, comprising but one large room, with plain benches, on which the boys were seated. This latter course was commenced at the age of seven or ten, and continued for some years. It included reading, writing, grammar, and music. A higher order of studies succeeded, especially a course of readings in poetry, the most beautiful passages of which were committed to memory. The love of the beautiful, both in nature

and art, was strongly developed, and its cultivation carried to a high degree of perfection. In every form of popular instruction their elaborate system of mythology was taught, which in their opinion rendered any other religious instruction unnecessary, — for with them a knowledge of their gods was a knowledge of religion.

We must add, that a class of their learned and distinguished teachers were called the *friends of wisdom* or philosophers. They had their Academies or schools. To these were drawn, by the fame of their teachers, by a love of their peculiar doctrines, or by an admiration of their varied accomplishments, great numbers of pupils, to whom instruction was given of the highest kind. These, however, were only the few, who went forth to become in their turn the teachers, law-givers, warriors, or historians of their age. Plato and Xenophon were the pupils of Socrates, as Alexander was of Aristotle. But the great mass were left in moral darkness, for, as we have said, moral and religious training found no place in their general systems of instruction except so far as it was connected with their systems of national mythology.

Of education among the *Romans* it is necessary, from our point of view, to say but little. It was, if we have read their history aright, chiefly

domestic. The influence of mothers in the education of their children was probably greater than in any other nation of antiquity. Cornelia said, pointing to her children, "These are my jewels"; and this expression, which was true in general as well as in this particular case, carried with it the strong and beautiful implication, that they had been polished and rendered more valuable by her instruction, culture, and care.

The State indeed made regulations for a system of general education, but the provision was withheld by which alone they could be executed. Early education, therefore, so far as there was any, was almost wholly domestic. It was made the duty of fathers to educate their sons; and by some, it was faithfully performed. But when, for want of ability, disposition, or leisure, it was neglected, then private teachers became their substitutes. The persons generally selected for this office were slaves, and for the most part Grecian slaves, many of whom were well educated. By these, the male children were instructed in reading, writing, arithmetic, sometimes in music, and more frequently in gymnastics. A slave thus employed, otherwise called *Custos*, attended his pupil wherever he went, counselled and controlled him, and frequently continued to exercise the office until his pupil had arrived at the age of manhood.

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Such was the general plan of education among the Romans. In the whole course of their history, we find no provision made for the culture of the moral or religious natures of their children; and the result accords entirely with what beforehand we should have expected, a gradual decline of virtue, and a general propensity to profligacy and vice. The strictness and severity which characterized the early Roman degenerated by degrees into effeminacy. The slave became a substitute for the parent; intellect and appetite usurped dominion over the affections and the heart; and as there was shed among them no savor of morals or infusion of religious principle, so immorality, corruption, and decay were the necessary and fatal consequence.

In general, then, we collect this testimony from various historians, that among the heathen nations of antiquity the lower classes of society, or in other words the great body of the people, were without much public teaching, and books were too scarce for general use. No provision was made for moral instruction of any kind; and they had nothing to direct their conduct aright but those natural feelings on the side of duty which are so easily corrupted. A large proportion of the people were slaves. They enjoyed but little of domestic life. They had

no hospitals of any description, nor was there any public provision for the relief of poverty or disease. Then, as now among nations uncivilized by Christianity, it was customary to expose their new-born infants to perish, when their maintenance might be burdensome, or when, from any other cause, they were not thought worth preserving. Gibbon says, — "The exposition of children was the prevailing and stubborn vice of antiquity"; and again he remarks, — "The Roman was stained with the blood of infants, till such murders were included by Valentinian and his colleagues in the letter and spirit of the Cornelian law." In the Grecian Gymnasiums, the youth were permitted to go through with a portion of their exercises under circumstances which Cicero says "had no very favorable effect upon public morals." Their religion had very little influence for good upon moral conduct; while some of its direct tendencies were to inflame the passions, and to countenance the vices of those among whom it prevailed. The philosophers, and their systems of ethics, had little or no effect in removing the ignorance or correcting the depravity of the age in which they lived. Their teachings were not addressed to the humble or unenlightened; nor were their moral discourses adapted to their comprehen-

sions, or placed within their reach. Such then, in general, in the exact language, for the most part, of authenticated history, was the condition, moral and religious, of most, if not all, the heathen nations of antiquity.

CHAPTER VI.

CHRISTIAN EDUCATION.—FIRST CENTURY.

WHEN the Author and Finisher of the Christian faith, Jesus the Messiah, announced by divine authority the doctrines of God's paternity, human brotherhood, and universal benevolence, the forgiveness of sins on repentance, the spirituality of religion, the soul's immortality, and its future accountability,—he put in operation principles, which were designed and fitted to change the whole current of feeling and action between the creature and his Creator; between man and his fellow-men; and especially between the parent and the child of his own bosom.

Before the advent of the Saviour, parents for the most part, as we have seen, had left their children to grow up in ignorance, or had educated them only for the present life. But when this great and Divine Teacher, recognizing them as heirs of immortality, said, "Suffer little children to come unto me, for of such is the kingdom of God,"—and, taking them up in his

nestly inculcated and deeply cherished ; and, with reverence for their ancestors, seems to be the sum and substance of their religion.

The *Persians*, if we may believe the writings of Xenophon, at a period in their history about five hundred years before the Christian era, seem to have provided themselves with a very perfect and extraordinary system of education. Its object was, by a general system of moral education, to *prevent* the inclinations of the people from a tendency to vice, and the perpetration of wicked and evil deeds. It was designed to embrace the whole people ; but it excepted apparently those children whose labors were needed for the daily support of their parents, and, to a certain extent, young men who had entered the marriage state. Except these, the whole male population were divided into four classes ; namely, the boys, the young men, the middle-aged, and the old. From the latter two classes were taken, by selection, the teachers of the former two. The main object of this system was moral instruction. It is said, for instance, "that the boys attend the school, where they are employed in *learning justice* ; and they declare that they go for this purpose, just as with us they go to school in order to receive elementary instruction." Their governors or teachers spent the greater part of every

day in sitting in judgment upon any of their number charged with theft, violence, fraud, or slander, as the case might be, and, if found guilty, inflicted the punishment prescribed. Ingratitude was considered as the germ of all baseness, and punished severely, as a crime. With great care, the boys were taught self-government or temperance, and obedience to magistrates, both of which were enforced by the example and precepts of the aged, and by their immediate teachers, whose lives were such as to be in perfect accordance with their principles. Their only diet was bread, vegetables, and water. These were brought from their homes, with a goblet, to be used at the school-house or their usual place of meeting. At the age of sixteen or seventeen, they were advanced to the class of young men. The latter in their turn had their duties and peculiar course of training, and the aged theirs. But a further description of this system would take us far beyond the object of this work. It was certainly admirable in itself, and worthy of all imitation so far as it made provision for the education of the moral nature and faculties of the child at an early period, and had for its chief end the prevention of vice and the moral culture of a whole people.

We think it worthy of record here, as we have

whose affectionate and tender spirit was so entirely in harmony with his Master's, and those of the young. How beautifully he writes on the subject! — "I write unto you, little children, because your sins are forgiven you for His name's sake. I write unto you, fathers, because ye have known Him that is from the beginning. I write unto you, young men, because ye have overcome the wicked one. I write unto you, little children, because ye have known the Father"; and much more in the same feeling and delightful strain, a parallel to which, we may venture to say, is not to be found in the entire previous history of the human family.

From the very earliest period, among all the professed disciples of Christ, the religious education of their children was an object of the deepest interest, and of the most zealous effort. It was perfectly natural that every new convert to this religion, with his mind full of its noble and elevating principles, and his heart glowing with the blessings which were to flow from it, should not only desire to be taught and baptized himself, but should likewise desire that "all his" should be duly initiated by instruction and baptism into the new kingdom; and to this end should teach all his household, at the earliest moment, its history, doctrines, precepts, and spirit, that they also

might be saved, and sympathize with him in all the joys, and trials, and sorrows, and hopes, and blessedness of the Christian's life. This is what, beforehand, we should have been led to expect; and, as a matter of history, there is sufficient proof, even in the few records that remain to us of the early fathers and brethren of the Christian church, that it was so in fact.

From these we learn, that every day it was the practice among the first Christians for each individual to commit a portion of Scripture to memory, and for the members of a family to repeat it to each other in the evening. They had a set time for conning their daily lesson, which each arranged to suit his own convenience, but upon which no secular business, however urgent, was permitted to infringe. The same high value which they attached to the Scriptures themselves, they endeavoured to impress upon the younger members of their families. From the state of the times, and the condition of primitive society, this duty was devolved almost entirely on the maternal care. The first words, it is said, which their children were taught to lisp and articulate, as they were fondled on the knee, or watched by the careful eyes of their nurse, were the sacred words of God and the Saviour. The whole range of nursery knowledge and amuse-

ment was comprised in narratives and pictures, illustrating scenes in the life of the holy Child, or the most simple and interesting of the parables in the ministry of Christ. Afterwards they were taught the doctrines of Scripture, the proverbs of Solomon, and the duties of life, as scattered over the sacred volume.

There were authors, it is said, in those early days, who, like Watts, "wrote little poems of devotion." These were set to well-known and favorite airs, sung by the Christians at their family concerts, which enlivened their meals, and which alone broke the quiet silence of their peaceful homes.

At a later period, when toleration allowed the erection of Christian schools, their school-books consisted chiefly of passages of the Bible versified, which illustrated and enforced faith and duty. Appollinaris, for this purpose, wrote the antiquities of the Jews, down to the time of Saul, in heroic verse. His son wrote another, in the form and style of Plato's Dialogues, comprising the history of the Évangelists, and the Epistles of Paul, besides a book of Natural History, with religious reflections. These, on their first appearance, took their place among the most esteemed productions of the age of the Fathers. Gregory Nazianzen, also, made a collection of miscella-

neous poems on sacred subjects, in all sorts of verse, which had a very extensive circulation. The works of these early days have, for the most part, become a prey to time ; but by them the early Christian youth were instructed in the elements of pure religion, under the watchful care of the parent, who intermingled with all their pursuits and recreations the one thing needful, the knowledge and spirit of the word of God.*

In confirmation of these facts, Tertullian says "that spiritual songs in common, and a common reading of the Scriptures, formed a part of the daily edification of a Christian family"; and this was religious education of the best kind. Other authorities state, that they "were accustomed to sanctify by prayer all the important seasons of the day, and all transactions of any importance, in regard either to spiritual or temporal life." Mosheim, in his Ecclesiastical History, expresses on this subject the following opinion, and refers in a note to the authorities by which he supposed it was sufficiently maintained. "There is no doubt but that children of Christians were fully trained up from their infancy, and were early put to reading the sacred books, and learning the principles of religion. For this

* See Jamieson's "Manners of the Primitive Christians," from which these facts are condensed.

purpose, schools were erected everywhere, from the beginning. From these schools for children we must carefully distinguish those *seminaries* of the early Christians, erected extensively in the larger cities, at which adults, and especially such as aspired to be public teachers, were instructed and educated in all branches of learning, both human and divine."

It is supposed, however, by later and more careful inquirers, — Neander, for instance, — that the proofs here referred to by Mosheim are insufficient to prove that in the *first* century there were established *regular schools* for their children, or academies for their young men. But, however this may be, there is no doubt that, as Mosheim affirms, all children of the early Christians were, in accordance with their great Teacher's example, and the apostolic injunctions, carefully trained up by their parents from their infancy "in the nurture and admonition of the Lord." In other respects, perhaps, neither their means nor opportunities were so ample, nor so publicly used, as he had supposed.

CHAPTER VII.

CHRISTIAN EDUCATION.—SECOND CENTURY.

CATECHUMENICAL SCHOOLS.

IN the first age of the Christian church, there was no distinction made between the initiated and the uninitiated. Beausobre says, — “The truth is, the first Christians had not the discipline which was afterward established, and did not distinguish between the catechumens and the faithful.” He who was ready to profess, and professed, that he regarded Jesus Christ as the Saviour of the world, and depended on him for his salvation, was baptized forthwith, and admitted to the church. This was the practice and condition of the Christian church through most of the first century. But at the close of the first, or at the beginning of the second century (for there is a difference of opinion as to the exact time),* it was found or thought necessary to

* Lamson says, — see *Christian Examiner*, 1844, — “that Justin Martyr” (who died before the end of the second century) “does not mention catechumens or catechumenical instruction.”

divide the people who attended on Christian worship into two classes, namely, the "Fideles," — the faithful, the true believers, — and the "Catechumens," or pupils, learners, or those under instruction. The first class were those who had made confession of their faith, had been solemnly baptized, and thereby initiated into all the privileges of church-membership and Christian worship. The second class were the lowest order of Christians in the primitive church, ignorant, uninstructed as yet in its doctrines, and unbaptized. For this class it was apparent that some degree of instruction was needed, in order to avert the constant danger of apostacy, which already had been a cause of much trouble to the early church.

This led to the establishment of the Catechumenical Schools; the pupils being called Catechumens. They were those to whom it was necessary to impart Christian instruction. This was by question and answer, or catechetical, and hence the derivation of these terms. In other words, these places of instruction were, under another name, the Sunday Schools of the first ages of Christianity.

These schools were composed of those adults who felt an interest in Christianity, who were earnest inquirers after the truth as it was in Je-

sus, and were desirous of receiving Christian instruction; and of such children, whether heathen or Christian, as had not been dedicated by Christian baptism. The former were admitted by the imposition of hands, and the sign of the cross marked upon the forehead. All children of Christian believers, as well as those of heathen parents when voluntarily offered, were admitted without any ceremony, as soon as they were old enough to receive religious instruction.

When, at a later period, these schools had assumed their most definite form, the catechumens were divided into *four* classes. The first, or youngest and least instructed portion, formed one class. These were not permitted to attend the church, or witness the services of public worship. The object of this exclusion is not very clear; but the general supposition is, that it arose from their supposed inability to be benefited by attendance, and that, "if kept on the tiptoe of expectation and desire," it would serve to excite a deeper interest when, at length, the time for their admission should arrive. But, after an examination of all the facts, it seems most probable, that all this veil of mystery which was drawn over the ordinances and higher services of Christian worship was in well-meant adaptation to the habits of the heathen, with whom such prac-

tices were common, and without which in the new religion, it was thought, they would not be prepared to appreciate its few and simple rites.

The second class in these schools were the *audientes*, so called because they were permitted to attend the church, standing in a particular place, and there making a part of the *audience* so far as to hear the Scriptures read and the sermon preached, but who were excluded, for the reasons above stated, from uniting in or hearing the prayer.

The third class were the *genuflectentes*, so denominated because they were required to kneel when they received the blessing, or laying on of the hands by the presbyter or pastor. This class were admitted to all the services and privileges of the church, except the communion; and this they were permitted to witness at a humble distance.

The fourth class were the *competentes*, or *electi*, who, as their name denotes, were now competent, fully instructed, and elect, or candidates for baptism and the Lord's Supper. Before, however, they were admitted to these full privileges, they were strictly examined in their entire course of catechetical exercises. This examination was continued, as we are told, for twenty days, accompanied with fasting and

prayer, and for some days before baptism the pupils, when abroad, went veiled. During this time, when necessary, they had daily private interviews with their minister for further instruction and prayer. These ceremonies, successfully concluded, ushered them into Christian society, to them an event of great interest, and which constituted an era in their religious history.

As to the kind and amount of instruction given in these schools, it was undoubtedly varied according to the age, wants, and capacity of the pupils. For the youngest, the very ignorant, and the feeble-minded, it consisted of simple instruction in the leading and fundamental facts and principles of the Christian faith. For those who were older, and more capable of grasping and understanding its highest truths and strongest evidences, suitable and competent teachers were provided. By these they were instructed in all things which could render them more firm in their faith, and more ardent in the cause of Christian perfection.

There was no fixed length of time for their continuance in the school; but it was extended and varied according to age, proficiency, and capacity. In general, however, there is reason to believe that it lasted two or three years.

The *Apostles' Creed*, as it is generally called,

had its origin probably in, and for the use of, these catechumenical schools. It arose, undoubtedly, from small beginnings. Such is the testimony. "Confessions of faith," says one, "were early framed or drawn up, including the essentials of Christianity in which all churches agreed." Now, as the youngest and most ignorant in these schools must have received all their instruction from the lips of their teachers without the aid of books, some simple compend of Scriptural and Christian truth became necessary. "Many of us," says Clement of Alexandria, "have received the doctrine by *faith*, (a short confession, so to speak, of the most urgent truths of religion,) without the use of writings, through the power of God." The few words of the confession or creed, says another, "passed into the heart of the catechumen, to go from living lips into his life, and to be declared by him as his own firm persuasion." Says Neander, "This confession of faith was imparted to the catechumens as containing the essentials of Christianity."

This first and simple confession of faith was compiled from the writings of the apostles. It was enlarged from time to time, for the use of these schools, or for the purpose of correcting some false doctrine or error which had recently

sprung up, or, as others, perhaps, would say, for the purpose of introducing some new one. No one, in those days, imagined that the apostles had composed such a creed; but, as most were persuaded that it contained the doctrines which they had preached, it came at length to be called the Apostles' Creed. In the fourth century it was in these words: —

“I believe in God, the Father Almighty; and in Jesus Christ, his only begotten Son, our Lord, who was born of the Virgin Mary by the Holy Ghost; who was crucified under Pontius Pilate, buried, arose from the dead on the third day, ascended to the heavens, and sits on the right hand of the Father, whence he will come to judge the living and the dead;—and in the Holy Spirit; the Holy Church; the remission of sins; and the resurrection of the body.” It was not till centuries later that it assumed its present form.

Now this simple creed was the only test required for admission to the church in those early days of Christianity, and was then regarded and taught as containing a summary and the substance of all Christian doctrine. Neander states, “that *this* confession of faith was made by the catechumens at baptism, in answer to separate questions”; and Mosheim, that “in the third and

fourth centuries, it was the guide of the catechists in training and instructing the catechumens in the principles of Christianity."

The question, as to *who* were the catechists or teachers in these early institutions, is rather a disputed one. After a careful examination of all the authorities within our reach, we arrive at the following conclusions. At the very earliest period of the Christian church, as we have seen, the whole body of believers in each particular community were divided into two classes, and not four, as afterward. Of these, the first, or uninstructed heathen class, received private instruction, either at their own homes or at places assigned for the purpose, but at all events, apart from the church. It does not appear whether any distinct church officer or minister was assigned to the discharge of this particular duty; but incidentally we find, that at one place, Carthage, it was devolved upon some person who was distinguished as a church reader; and this, therefore, may have been the more general practice. At Alexandria, however, where well-educated and learned men often presented themselves for Christian instruction, it became necessary to provide able and learned teachers; and there the office was often filled by distinguished laymen; which circumstance, in all probability, led to the forma-

tion of the celebrated school to be noticed in the next chapter. The second class of believers were those who made up the usual congregations of worshippers, and there they received from their pastors general instruction, and the ordinances of the Christian church.

When, afterward, the schools assumed their latest form, and the pupils were divided into four classes, they seem, according to the best authorities, to have been instructed by a class of ministers distinct from the bishops, presbyters, or rather pastors, and had their *catechumena* or *auditores* apart, in a separate place from the church, but together. These ministers or teachers were not, however, a distinct order of clergy, but were selected or chosen from among them at large. Sometimes, it is said, the bishop—that is, the pastor of the cathedral church—himself discharged the duties of the office; at other times, that it was performed by presbyters, missionaries, readers, or deacons.

These, then, were the simple means—domestic instruction, catechumenical schools, and the living voice of the gospel herald with his supernatural gifts—by which, in the first and second centuries, Christianity, with its precepts and principles, its saving truths and immortal hopes, was imparted to the young, enforced upon the aged,

extended to the heathen, and its enduring triumphs accelerated and sustained, notwithstanding all the obstacles it had to encounter from power, influence, persecution, martyrdom, and the terrors of an ignominious death.

CHAPTER VIII.

CHRISTIAN EDUCATION.—THIRD CENTURY.

CATECHETICAL SCHOOL AT ALEXANDRIA.

DURING the first two centuries, the Christian body were not agreed as to the necessity or utility of learning and philosophy. Indeed, a great majority would have "banished all reasoning out of the church," from a strong, and to us a strange fear, which was widely entertained, that high intellectual culture and much learning would prove injurious, if not fatal, to piety. And from this cause it was, that in the second century there was an open warfare carried on between intelligence and faith on the one side, and ignorance and superstition on the other; and in some portions of the Christian church this warfare has not ceased even to the present day.

At length, however, though by slow degrees, the cause of education and learning obtained such a triumph over the opposite party, that regulations were made that no person should be

admitted to the office of a Christian teacher who was entirely illiterate and unlearned.

The city of Alexandria was remarkable as an intermediate and connecting link between the Eastern and Western worlds, and as one of the most flourishing seats of Grecian literature and civilization. At this place, accordingly, as we have noticed in a previous chapter, many well educated and talented men presented themselves, that they might be instructed and fully grounded in Christian principles and the duties of religion. To meet this exigency, the establishment of a school was almost the natural and unavoidable consequence. And this, beyond a doubt, was the origin of the celebrated *Catechetical School at Alexandria*. It dates its commencement from somewhere about the middle to the close of the second century. In the first instance, it was designed only for the Christian education of children belonging to that city, and for those proselytes from heathenism, whether young or old, who might apply there for Christian instruction. It soon acquired, however, peculiar consequence from the character and standing of some of those who came to it for instruction. One person was then selected to preside over it, who received his appointment from the bishop, — the minister of the cathedral, — and was called the Catechist.

By some authorities, it is called the School of Ammonius, who is supposed to have been its first teacher. But this, probably, is a mistake. It is true that at about this period one or more persons of that name were distinguished teachers there, of heathen philosophy, or Christian doctrines, or both; but there is no sufficient proof that either of them was a catechist of this school. On the contrary, there is better reason for believing that Pantænus, who had been a Stoic philosopher, was its first teacher, somewhere about A. D. 181, and Clement its second. Eusebius says, that Origen, at the early age of eighteen, was one of its scholars, under Clement. The latter presided over it from A. D. 191 to A. D. 202, and probably to a somewhat later period. Origen was its next catechist, A. D. 213. Under his charge there was a great increase in the numbers of this school, and, finding that his labors were too arduous, in addition to his other literary engagements, he divided them with another, Heraclas, and formed his catechumens into two classes, — the one comprising the younger portion; the other, the adults. He gave the former into the hands of Heraclas for primary and preparatory instruction, reserving the second to himself, imparting deeper and more varied knowledge, and, from time to time, reviewing the whole.

In the course of this century, the friends of literature and philosophy gained a gradual ascendancy, if not in numbers, at least in consideration and influence; and this school, under the guidance and instruction of Origen, contributed not a little to this desirable and beneficial result.

Gieseler, the ecclesiastical historian, remarks, "that in this highly cultivated city [Alexandria], the necessity of something more than the usual instruction of catechumens had been very early felt, as well for the philosophical proselytes, *as for those who were in future to become teachers.*" This school gradually approximated more and more to this character. For such a purpose, it required for the office of catechists men learned alike in the Grecian mythology and the various philosophical systems then in vogue. "He who desires," says Clement, "to select that which is the most useful for the catechumens, and more especially when there are Hellenists [those of Grecian birth and education], he must not, like beasts devoid of reason, refuse to learn much, but he must seek to gather together as many aids as possible for his hearers." And again he remarks, — "All cultivation is useful, and especially the study of the Holy Scriptures is necessary, in order to be able to prove what we bring forward, and also where the auditors are

of Hellenic [Grecian] education." Under such opinions and influences, it naturally occurred that the sphere and objects of this school were enlarged from time to time; its catechists were taken for the most part from among those who had been converted from heathenism, and who at the same time were distinguished for their literary attainments and knowledge, till at length it became a learned seminary, a theological school, in which, as in those of our day, pupils were trained for the ministry of the Christian church, in the cause of which they frequently not only spent their fortunes, but sacrificed their lives.

The course of instruction at this school embraced logic, rhetoric, mathematics, natural philosophy, Grecian literature, and the eclectic philosophy. With these were combined the principal branches of theological study, the exegesis of the Scriptures, the doctrines of religion, the traditions of the church, and a thorough knowledge of Christian theology.

Those doctrines which were peculiar to the Eastern branch of the Christian church were developed at this school. The principal of these were, the doctrine of faith so called, the immateriality of God's person, the dependent and derived nature of Jesus Christ, the moral freedom of man, the life of the spirit after death inde-

pendent of a resurrection of the material body, and the remedial nature of all punishment. Thus far they were the liberal school of ancient days ; but they also endeavoured to reconcile the Gnostic philosophy and fantasies with the doctrines of the church, adopted an allegorical and a too fanciful method of interpreting the Bible, and by these means contributed not a little to the corruption of Christianity.

Heraclas, Dionysius (A. D. 247), Pierius, and Theognostus at the close of the third century, are mentioned as successors to Origen ; and the history of this school can be traced down to the middle of the fourth century, when it became extinct.

It is proper to add here, that another theological school, similar to the one at Alexandria, was subsequently established at Antioch. It was in its most prosperous condition about the middle of the fourth century, and from which went forth Arius, and his most distinguished friends and advocates. This school exercised a great influence in determining for the church the right method of interpreting the Scriptures. Another school of a similar character was established by Pamphilus at Cesarea, in which, as at Antioch, the study of the Bible and its proper interpretation were pursued, as we are told by ecclesiastical his-

torians, with "a true spirit of exegesis," and with great earnestness and success. Eusebius was probably a pupil of this school.

After this period, or a little later, we lose all sight of these, as well as the catechumenical schools. Seemingly, no provision remained for the religious education of the young. But the family and the Christian home were left, and we catch here and there a bright glimpse of evidence that parental instruction was faithfully continued. Let us give an example or two.

In this century Galerius invaded Antioch, to force the Christians to renounce their pure and heaven-descended religion. Romanus, a man of noble family, and a deacon of the church at Caesarea, was, among others, arrested and scourged. The leader of those who scourged him said, — "Thy crucified Christ is but a yesterday's god; the gods of the Gentiles are the most ancient." Romanus desired him to hear what a *child* of seven years of age could say on the subject. His request being granted, — "Tell me, my child," said Romanus, "do you think it reasonable that we should worship many gods?" The child answered, — "That whatever men affirm to be a god must be one; and that Christ is the true God. That there are many gods, even we children cannot believe."

This must be regarded as an apt answer for a child but seven years of age ; and, while it discloses an error which already had crept into the Christian church, is an evidence of faithful instruction on the part of the parent. The sequel is deeply interesting, and we give it at length as we find it recorded.

“The captain commanded the child to be scourged. The mother said to the child, when asking for a draught of cold water, — ‘Thirst, my child, after the cup that the infant of Bethlehem once drank of.’ The tormenter treated the child cruelly, by blows on its head. The mother cried, — ‘Suffer, my child ; thou shalt go to Him who will adorn thy head with a crown of glory.’ When the tormenter required the child of the mother, who had taken it up in her arms, she, kissing it, said, — ‘Farewell, my sweet child !’ and as the hangman was cutting off its head, she said, — ‘Precious in the sight of the Lord is the death of his saints !’”

As another instance of a similar kind in the same century, we add the following.

“In Cesarea in Cappadocia, a child named Cyril was persecuted, on account of his Christian belief, by his own brethren and family. He was driven, as we infer, by his own father to the hall of justice. The judge said to him, — ‘My child,

I will pardon your faults, and your father shall receive you again. It is in your power to enjoy your father's estate, provided you are wise, and take care of your own interest.' 'I rejoice to bear reproach,' said the child; 'God will receive me. I am not sorry I am driven out of our house; I shall have a better mansion. I fear not death, because it will introduce me into a better life.' He was then led away to martyrdom. 'Your fire and your sword I do not regard,' said he; 'I go to a better house; I go to more excellent riches;—despatch me presently, that I may enjoy them.' Those who saw him wept. 'You should rather rejoice,' said he; 'you know not what a city I am going to inhabit, nor what is my hope.' The people were astonished at the constancy of the young martyr."

Here were the father and all his brethren arrayed against the child. From whence, then, this educated mind, and these noble Christian sentiments of the child? Where, think ye, was his mother; and what, think ye, were *her* principles?

CHAPTER IX.

CHRISTIAN EDUCATION.—FROM THE FOURTH TO THE TWELFTH CENTURY.

THE DARK AGES.

From this point, we come at once to that period so significantly distinguished as the Dark Ages. This term designates truly the condition of the world from the fourth to the fifteenth century in regard to education, intellectual light, literature, and religious and moral culture.

In the first era of the Christian church, Rome — itself the world as well as the mistress of it — was in a state of internal corruption and decay. In consequence of her great wealth and concentrated power in a few cities, ignorance, luxury, and effeminacy were preying upon her vitals; and though outwardly and apparently great and strong, these evil tendencies were weakening and sapping her very foundations. The incursions of the Northern barbarians, which subsequently followed, accelerated and completed the fall of this once magnificent empire; while their final

settlement in Gaul, Spain, and Italy consummated the downfall of the arts, and, in general, all that remained of education and literature.

By this event, the Latin tongue as a living language was superseded by the barbarous dialects of those rude, reckless, and untutored invaders. As the wisdom of the past and all that was most valuable and accessible in books was contained at that time in the Latin tongue, the effect of this Gothic invasion was to shut out at once all knowledge from the great body of the people, and, in a good degree, even from those who otherwise would have desired and obtained it.

Another cause which operated to produce this state of ignorance and darkness was the natural fear on the part of most Christians of all heathen literature. In the *Eastern* branch of the church, as we have seen, this fear, in a great measure, had been overcome, and the great catechetical school at Alexandria established. But from this point we lose sight of that branch of the church, which continued to increase and flourish until the seventh century, but after which time was nearly prostrated and overcome by the Saracens, who, by their rigorous measures, converted hundreds of thousands of Christians to the religion of Mahomet.

Following, however, the stream of Christianity and civilization *Westward*, we find that this fear of, and dislike to, pagan learning and heathen books were never conquered ; but continued to increase, and at length obtained a general and almost fatal ascendancy. Tertullian had taken the lead in adapting the Latin tongue to the expression of Christian ideas in the West, and by this means his "gross material conceptions" were infused early into this portion of the Christian church. Augustine followed, and his doctrines and views, having a similar character and tendency, became its established faith.

These views were in perfect contrast to those of the Eastern church. By them, the Deity was invested with a body, and they believed the human soul was literally his breath. They believed in the millennium in its lowest form ; in the resurrection of the material body ; in the damnation of all unbelievers ; and in the doctrine of eternal punishment. As a body, they were averse to all theological speculation, and were entirely passive as to any means or measures for mental improvement. With them, no education was better than a heathen one, or one obtained through the study of heathen books. In the fourth century this fear of learning had become so strong, that we find a council at Car-

thage prohibiting the reading of all secular books, even by bishops. Physical science was held in the greatest aversion, as inconsistent with revealed truth. With, as yet, no books of their own, and all the new languages in a state of transition, they had no means but the living voice by which to communicate even such knowledge as they had to the great body of their followers.

From these and other causes, a general ignorance and universal darkness inevitably followed. As a natural consequence, as early as the fifth century, monastic cloisters, an ascetic spirit, and "a thousand superstitions, like foul animals of night," sprang up, and everywhere prevailed. In the sixth century, the best Latin authors were scarcely read. In the eighth century, this darkness and corruption, this ignorance and superstition, had attained their highest point in France, so that the great Charlemagne himself was not able even to write; and in England it was delayed only to the ninth century, when even Alfred, reputed as a learned king, found it difficult to translate, on account of his imperfect knowledge of the Latin tongue. In the tenth century scarcely one could be found, even in Rome itself, who knew the first elements of letters. In Spain, not one in a thousand could write a common letter of salutation. In England, the

priests did not understand the ordinary prayers, and could not translate Latin into their mother tongue. All the learning, however, that remained was wholly with the clergy ; but as a body, they were very little superior to the uninstructed laity. The homilies which they preached were compiled by some of their number, a little more learned than the rest, from the writings of the Fathers, or from other accessible sources. Licentiousness, the natural child of ignorance and superstition, disgraced their characters, and became so open, that "it was hardly concealed by their cowls." To sum up the whole in a single sentence, it was a rare thing for centuries for a layman, of whatever rank, to know how to sign his name. The cross was the only and the universal signature. The newly formed languages were hardly used by any in writing ; and while Latin was the medium of public correspondence and legal proceedings, so far as there were any, the use of letters and books, as a general fact, was among the lost and forgotten things of earth.

It is observed by Hallam, that "Religion alone made a bridge, as it were, across the chaos, and has linked the two periods of ancient and modern civilization." And it is true, that, ignorant and corrupt as they generally were, the monks and ministers of religion — of Christianity

—stood out in strong contrast from the great mass, “as lights set upon a hill.” The elements of a better and brighter day were hid with them. It was they who preserved the language, and books, and manuscripts of ancient literature. It was they who, to any extent, set an example of self-denial, a desire for the salvation of souls by the extension of Christianity, and a spirit of disinterested exertion and self-sacrifice for progress among men in virtue, knowledge, and religion.

The only schools of which we have any account during these dark ages were those connected with the cathedrals and monasteries. Of these, we shall give some account in the next chapter.

CHAPTER X.

SCHOOLS IN THE DARK AGES.

CATHEDRAL, EPISCOPAL, AND CONVENTUAL SCHOOLS.

AFTER the fifth century, the Cathedral, Episcopal, and Conventual schools took the place of those earlier ones which we have before described, — we mean, the catechumenical, for the instruction of children, and the catechetical, for the education of clergymen, — both of which from this period seem to have been wholly discontinued.

The schools of which we are now first to speak may be traced in history, from the fifth to the tenth century, under the names of the Episcopal or Cathedral schools; sometimes being called by the one, and sometimes by the other name. Up to the latter period, by whichever name they are called, they mean one and the same thing. But after the latter period, the term Cathedral alone is used, and denotes, in some respects, a different kind of school.

During the period to which we now refer, we find that to almost every cathedral or metropolitan church there was attached a school, supported and controlled by the Episcopate. These schools were designed for the instruction of those young persons who were intended for the clerical profession. The bishop (*episcopus*), or minister of the *cathedral*, or some one appointed by him, exercised the office of teacher, directed their studies, and controlled the schools,—and hence their name.

The branches taught in these schools were confined within very narrow limits; and for the most part, their teachers were ignorant and grossly incompetent. The whole circle of knowledge, in those days, was included in the seven liberal arts, so called. The first three of these, Grammar or Philology, Rhetoric, and Logic, were called the *Trivium*; and the other four, Arithmetic, Geometry, Astronomy, and Music, the *Quadrivium*. These were all taught from a single book, called Capella's Encyclopædia, otherwise the "Satyricon," which, for a thousand years, was the common text-book in all the schools of Europe. "All these studies," says Hallam, "were referred to theology, and that in the narrowest manner; music, for example, being reduced to church chanting, and astronomy to

the calculation of Easter." In most of these schools, the teacher did not venture to go beyond the *Trivium*.

From the seventh to the tenth century these schools had become, for the most part, extinct. In the eighth century, Charlemagne, king of the Franks, himself a man of letters, made a strong effort to dispel the ignorance which everywhere prevailed. For this purpose he obtained teachers from abroad, — among the number, the celebrated Alcuin from England, — and issued a decree for the revival and improvement of all the schools in his far-extended empire. But such was the deplorable ignorance of the times, that it was necessary, in doing this, to prescribe, "that the clerical teachers should be able to read the Lord's Prayer." He succeeded in some degree in reviving the Cathedral and Conventual schools; and it is during this period that we find the first mention which is made of any participation on the part of females in the benefits of instruction. "The ladies of his court," it is said, "also partook in the benefits of instruction; and some nunneries in their institutions for female education rivalled the seminaries of the monasteries."

As we possess a single specimen of the mode of teaching, and the kind and character of the instruction imparted at this period, we think it

worthy to be recalled and recorded here. The lesson is one that was given to Pepin, the son of Charlemagne, A. D. 800.

“What are letters? The keepers of history. What is life? The gladness of the blessed, the sorrow of the wretched, the expectation of death. What is death? The inevitable event; the uncertain pilgrimage; the thief of man. What is man? The slave of death; a transient traveler; a local guest. Where is man placed? Between six walls; above, below, before, behind, on the right hand, and on the left. What is sleep? The image of death. What is liberty? Innocence. In how many ways is man changeable? In six,—from hunger to fulness; from labor to rest; from wakefulness to sleep. What is the head? The crown of the body. What is the body? The home of the mind. What is the brain? The preserver of the memory. What are the eyes? The guides of the body; the vessels of light; the index of the mind. What are teeth? The mill-stones of our food. What are the hands? The workmen of the body. What are the legs? The pillars of the body. What are the feet? Our movable foundation. What is the moon? The eye of the night; the prophetess of the weather. What are the stars? The seamen’s pilot; the ornaments

of the night. What is rain? The mother of corn. What is a cloud? The night of day. What is the sea? The pathway of audacity; the boundaries of earth. What is snow? Dry water. What is winter? The absence of summer. Spring? The painter of the earth. Summer? The reclother of earth; the ripener of corn. Autumn? The granary of the year. What makes bitter things sweet? Hunger. What never makes us weary? Gain. What is a silent messenger? A letter."

From a child's reading-book, called "Elfric's Dialogues," of the same century, we select a short specimen for the same purpose.

"*Man.* What do you eat?

"*Child.* I feed on flesh-meat.

"*Man.* What more do you eat?

"*Child.* Herbs, eggs, fish, cheese, butter, and beans, and all clean things, with many thanks.

"*Man.* What do you drink?

"*Child.* Ale, when I have it; or water, when I have it not."

But whatever might have been the success which attended, for a while, this noble effort on the part of Charlemagne to revive learning, it did not last long, nor extend far. During the ninth and tenth centuries, as we have seen, there was nearly a total mental and moral darkness. What

little incoherent knowledge remained was found among the clergy, and taught by the Episcopal and Cathedral schools, as we have described them.

From this period, these schools take in history the name of Cathedral, and were similar in character to the common schools of the day, called the *Trivial*. It is allowed, by general consent, that the methods of instruction in all these schools were tedious and barren in the extreme, loading the memory with technical phrases which were not understood, and words without any perceptible meaning or use.

CONVENTUAL SCHOOLS.

In the sixth century, Benedict, or St. Benedict, as he is more usually styled, was the first to establish a regularly constituted monastery. This he did at Monte Cassino, in the kingdom of Naples. With a view to exclude idleness, he prescribed in the rules of his order, in addition to what he called "the work of God," such as the reading of religious writings, and the utterance of their customary prayers, that the brethren should give instruction to youth in reading, writing, and ciphering; in the doctrines of Christianity; in manual labor, including the mechanic arts; and in the management of the monastery.

At first, this instruction was designed for the

single purpose of preparing persons for the monastic life. But afterward, when their numbers had greatly increased, they became regular seminaries of learning, and were resorted to by laymen or youth who were desirous of obtaining a more general and generous education than could elsewhere be obtained. They were regarded as much superior to the Trivial schools of the day; and several of their teachers, the abbots or monks of these monasteries, acquired such a reputation for skill in teaching as to attract pupils from great distances. They even rivalled the Episcopal or Cathedral schools; but, for the most part, the character of their instruction was rude and meagre, and their object was rather to subserve the cause of the monastery and the Church, than to impart valuable instruction or a comprehensive view of knowledge.

As there exists a description in dialogue of the employments of those who were scholars in these monasteries, we add it here, to complete our picture of these schools.

“What have you been doing to-day?” The boy answers, — “Many things. When I heard the knell, I rose from my bed and went to church, and sang the song for before-day with the brethren; afterwards of all saints, and at the dawn of day, the song of praise. After this I

said the first and seventh psalms, with the litanies, and the first mass. Afterwards, before noon, we did the mass for the day. At mid-day, we sang and ate, and drank and slept; and again we rose and sang, and here we are, ready to hear what thou shalt say to us."

The dialogue proceeds: — "When will you sing the evening or night song? *Boy*. When it is time. *Interrogator*. Wert thou flogged to-day? *Boy*. No. *Int*. Where do you sleep? *Boy*. In the room with the brethren. *Int*. Who rouses you to prayer before day? *Boy*. Sometimes I hear the bell and rise; sometimes my master wakes me sternly with his rod." When asked why the boys studied so diligently, his simple-hearted reply is, — "That we may not be like the stupid animals, that only know grass and water."

In connection with these monasteries, Benedict also founded libraries, for the use of which the aged and feeble brethren were required to copy manuscripts. His primary object in this had reference only to the preservation of religious writings; but afterwards it was extended to all classical works. To this circumstance the world is mainly, if not entirely, indebted for the preservation of almost all we have of ancient classical and literary treasures.

CHAPTER XI.

CHRISTIAN EDUCATION.—FROM THE TWELFTH TO THE SIXTEENTH CENTURY.

CHIVALRY AND THE UNIVERSITIES.

THAT deep darkness which had so long brooded over the ages was, as we find, drawing to a close at the beginning of the twelfth century. In the eleventh century a thirst for knowledge had begun to revive. It gradually spread among all the more civilized nations of Europe, and continued to revive and extend itself, awakening an extraordinary zeal for the cultivation of learning during the three following centuries.

The causes for this were various ; but, for the present purpose, they may be summed up in a few sentences. As among the first may be regarded the establishment of manufactures and the extension of commerce. To these we may add the invention of the mariner's compass, improvements in architecture, both domestic and ecclesiastical, the institution of chivalry, and, lastly, the Crusades, by which the human mind was

greatly excited and expanded, a number of arts and sciences before unknown in Europe introduced, and the elevation of the lower ranks effected, which was the natural result of the whole. We might further add, that a wide-extended spirit of dissent was manifested to the Romish Church in these centuries by the Albigenses and Waldenses, two religious sects who spread themselves over Germany, Switzerland, and France, and also by the Hussites in Bohemia, and the Lollards in England. This circumstance exercised a great influence over the moral condition of the people, and did much to excite a love for religion and learning.

But it is more within the immediate scope of the present work to speak of two of those especial forms by which moral and religious instruction was conveyed to the young during this period.

CHIVALRY was one of these forms. It had its origin in the twelfth century ; and, though not a school, nor having actual schools as one of its instrumentalities, it nevertheless rapidly and extensively disciplined the minds of that age, and developed such moral principles as loyalty, justice, valor, courtesy, and generosity.

In this school, if we may so call it, large numbers were regularly educated for knighthood.

The sons of gentlemen were sent to neighbouring castles, and brought up in the courts of their superiors, — the lords and barons of the land, — where they were trained and disciplined in the profession to which from thenceforth they were to be set apart. Honor was the motive, enthusiasm the spirit, and knighthood, or arms, the end. From the age of seven to fourteen, they were called *varlets*, or *pages*, having appropriate duties assigned them during this term, chiefly in attending upon the ladies of the particular court to which they were attached. At fourteen they were advanced to another degree, and took the name of *esquires*. At this period they were instructed in the use of arms, in the art of horsemanship, and in many other exercises of strength and agility. They attended their masters to the tournaments, which were exceedingly magnificent and romantic in their character, — bore for them their shields, and riveted that armour which, as yet, they were not permitted to wear. But the particular kind of discipline and instruction which they received, and which was most important in its consequences on society, was obedience to superiors, courtesy of manners, and the principle of honor deeply implanted, which at all times and everywhere was to govern and regulate their conduct. The last, though not the highest motive,

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was, at this particular juncture, a most important one in the progress and advancement of the human family. At the age of twenty-one they were duly knighted, which circumstance was attended with a most imposing ceremony. It was preceded and accompanied by religious rites, during which the candidate made a solemn pledge or promise of general fidelity, of protection to ladies and orphans, of harmony with equals, of truth to all, and slander upon none. Hallam says, — "The defence of God's law against infidels was his primary and standing duty." At the close of this service he was dubbed or knighted by the laying on of the sword, and then dismissed with the solemn injunction, — Be faithful, be bold, be fortunate.

This school, such as we have described it, was the principal one of the age. It was subsequently merged in the Crusades; but while it lasted, though attended with much fanaticism and no little folly, exercised, upon the whole, a good influence, in elevating the female sex, in creating a respect for laws and government when both were in the lowest state of depression, and excited in no small degree a love for literature, especially in its imaginative and poetical aspects. But as it also created a thirst for military renown and a love of war, it was so far antichristian and injurious in its spirit and character.

The other form which education assumed in these three centuries was that of the UNIVERSITY. An extraordinary zeal, as we have before mentioned, had appeared in the eleventh century for the cultivation of learning, which in the twelfth "broke out into a flame." Schools of a higher class were seen to rise up in every part of Europe. Large numbers flocked to these academies and schools of philosophy, which by law were now made bodies corporate, with various immunities and privileges; and in the next century (the thirteenth) they became universities. Of these we now wish to speak.

The University at Paris, one of the earliest and most distinguished of them, may be cited as a specimen of the whole. This, in a previous century, had been commenced, probably by Charlemagne, simply as a school in which the higher branches of philosophy and logic were taught. The celebrated Abelard having become its teacher, it rose at once to great eminence and distinction. It received a charter in the twelfth century, and the number of its pupils continually and rapidly increased. It was composed of seven classes. Students resorted to it from all parts of Europe, so that its Faculty of Arts was divided into Nations, namely, France, Picardy, Normandy, and England, each with a Rector of its own,

and when united outnumbered the three higher faculties of Theology, Law, and Medicine. For the latter a Dean was chosen every year ; but the Rector chosen by the Nations was at the head of the whole University, and of the Faculty of the Arts in particular.

The great object of study, at this time, was jurisprudence ; but especially canon law and metaphysics. These studies gave a character to this and the two succeeding centuries. "The chief attraction," says Hallam, "to the studious was the new scholastic philosophy. The love of contention, especially with such arms as the art of dialectics supplied to an acute understanding, is natural enough to mankind. That of speculating upon the mysterious questions of metaphysics and theology is not less so." Those who engaged in these discussions, the Schoolmen, as they were called, were divided into two great parties, called the *Nominalists* and the *Realists* ;—the one maintaining, and the other denying, *the reality of universal ideas*. This was one of their principal subjects of discussion. Another was the freedom of the will ; but, as we are told by high authority, it was their chief aim, in all their discussions, "to establish the principles of natural theology by abstract reasoning" ; and it would be difficult, it is said, "to

mention any theoretical argument to prove the divine attributes, or any objection capable of being raised against the proof, which we do not find in some of the scholastic philosophy." But in general, their prominent subjects of dispute, we are led to believe, turned upon questions which were alike absurd or contradictory, or beyond the reach of human comprehension.

The University of Paris, of which we are speaking, stood unrivalled for instruction in this kind of scholastic theology, which gave a taste throughout Europe for metaphysical discussions. During the thirteenth century, fifteen colleges were added to this University, beside one or two of an earlier date. It received many rich bequests, and could boast of more splendid foundations than any other. The number of scholars which were in attendance on this University at one and the same time is estimated as high as twenty or thirty thousand.

Besides this University at Paris, there were others during the same period at Bologna, Padua, Naples, Toulouse, Montpellier, Salamanca, Prague, Erfurt, Wittemburg, Geneva; Oxford, and Cambridge, England. The two latter date their rise from about the twelfth century, and the one at Oxford was so celebrated, that at one time, in the reign of Henry the Third, its scholars were numbered by thousands.

These universities became so popular, and their studies so absorbing, and especially the study of canon law, the great avenue to preferment in church and state, that sacred literature was sadly if not wholly neglected, and the monastic and cathedral schools gradually declined, and, as one authority states, "came to nothing." In the twelfth century, the Pontiff Alexander the Third endeavoured to revive the schools of the Church, but in vain. In the thirteenth, fourteenth, and fifteenth centuries, learning was much cherished; honors and rewards were offered to learned men; Grecian literature was revived; libraries collected; and splendid endowments made; but the peculiar studies and discussions to which we have referred were so engrossing, that, while these, as all contemporary history affirms, were of little service to mankind, the great mass were left, as in every previous period, unregarded, and without much, if any, intellectual, moral, or religious culture.

CHAPTER XII.

CHRISTIAN EDUCATION.—SIXTEENTH CENTURY.

THE REFORMATION AND ITS EFFECTS.

THE science of dialectics, and the philosophy of Aristotle under the name of scholastic philosophy, held their sway over the Christian world for nearly five centuries; that is, from the eleventh to the sixteenth,—the time of the Reformation. As D'Aubigné remarks, however,—“The Church was still the Church, although fallen, and more and more enslaved. In a word, she was at all times the friend of man. Her hands, though manacled, still dispensed blessings.” When we think of the long slumber of the world through the Dark Ages, we are apt to ask despondingly, Where was Christianity, and what influence did she exert, through all that dreary period? And many, if not most, are ready to answer, Little, or little for good. But when we recall the facts, that by the efforts of individuals, communities, and churches, Christianity was extended, during

this period, under the most discouraging and trying difficulties, to the farthest regions of the earth, civilized and barbarous,—that chivalry was born of it, which did so much to civilize and elevate woman and the world,—and that Peter the Hermit, by his single appeal to the great body of believers, could call into being those wonderful crusades for the redemption of the Holy Sepulchre,—we cannot fail to perceive that the religion of the cross, though sadly corrupted and abused, had been actively at work, and, by its open or silent agency, had obtained a deep hold on the human heart. Its great error was, that it had shrunk away from intellectual light, and permitted a deep darkness to creep in over the understandings of men. Its principal clergy had gradually sunk into the grossest ignorance, who appointed for preachers in the country towns and villages “poor wretches whom they had taken from beggary, who had been cooks, musicians, huntsmen, stable-boys, and even worse.” As a certain and natural consequence, general ignorance, superstition, and depravity everywhere prevailed. The sale of indulgences followed, granted by the hierarchy at Rome to procure the means by which to pamper their depraved appetites and passions, and to uphold a state of luxury and pomp wholly in-

consistent with the letter and spirit of their religion.

Such was the state of things just previous to the Reformation. But at this period — that is, at the close of the fifteenth, and at the beginning of the sixteenth century — there were many scholars and learned men who were ready to act in a manner independent of the scholastic divines and the Catholic Church, so that in fact an open war, to some extent, existed between them.

John Reuchlin was among the earliest and most active to display a more liberal turn of thought, and to cultivate and foster the study of the Greek language and of Grecian literature. The names of Melancthon and Erasmus stand out at this time with equal or greater prominence, and as among the foremost of those who loved and encouraged similar studies, the tendency of which was to free the mind alike from scholastic subtilties, and pernicious superstitions. A great influence was exerted by these over the destinies of the coming age. It led immediately to the study of the Holy Scriptures in their original languages; and as the art of printing was discovered at about the same period, it became an important auxiliary to the same end, by multiplying rapidly the copies of this and

other valuable works, and bringing them within the reach of great numbers. By these and other agencies, the means and modes of education were greatly increased and improved. This fact may be illustrated by a brief account of the education which Luther, the great agent of the Reformation, was, at this time, able to obtain.

His father, as all know, was a poor miner. Desiring an education for this son, he sent him at first, at a very early age, day by day, to the house of one George Commenius, a private teacher. At this school he was taught "the heads of the catechism, the ten commandments, the Apostles' Creed, the Lord's Prayer, some hymns and forms of prayer, a Latin grammar, and to read from Cizio Janus, a singular calendar of the tenth and eleventh centuries." At fourteen, he was sent to a school of the Franciscans at Magdeburg, a conventual school. He staid there but a short time, and no account is given of his studies. From thence he was sent to a celebrated school at Eisenach. At this school he made rapid progress in the study of rhetoric, poetry, and the dead languages. He wrote sermons and made verses,—but, thirsting after more and higher knowledge, he removed to the University at Erfurt. Here, according to the custom of the times, he studied the ethics of Aristotle, and

natural as well as the scholastic philosophy. But eager for still better and richer food, he applied himself to the study of the best ancient and classic authors, — Cicero, Virgil, and others, — and thus completed his course. Such was the education for which the spirit of the times awakened a desire in the heart of a miner's son, and which its extended means, so rapidly increased, enabled him, and many like him, at this period to obtain.

Early in the sixteenth century, the University at Wittemburg was established, and Luther appointed one of its professors. From thenceforth it became the nursery of the Reformation.

The effect of this event was attended with the most important consequences alike to religion, learning, and education. Wherever the Reformation became general, it exerted a manifest and decided influence upon all schools and seminaries of learning, even in the Catholic states, but everywhere and to a great extent in the kingdom of Germany. Mosheim says, — "It was highly honorable to the Lutherans, that they cultivated everywhere, not only sacred learning, but also every branch of human knowledge, and that they illustrated both literature and theology with many and important accessions." They opened numerous schools in all their cities; high

salaries were given to literary and scientific men; nearly every branch of human science was cultivated; and a knowledge of the Scriptures in the original Hebrew and Greek languages was considered indispensable to a Christian teacher. For the first time, schools for girls were founded, and in the villages instructors were appointed to teach the catechism. In the cities, they established Gymnasiums and Lyceums, with permanent teachers. The property of convents, confiscated by government, was generally applied to the use of the schools. The study of the Scriptures was particularly encouraged, and the spirit of Christian piety and benevolence earnestly inculcated.

The consequence of this movement was twofold. On the one hand, the Catholics were led by it, as a matter of self-defence, to a new interest in the subject of education. This is manifest by the new and increased vigor which they imparted at this time to their conventual and other schools, and by the establishment of the Order of the Jesuits, who made the education of the young a leading object, and founded and supported a great number of colleges and schools. And on the other hand, it led the Reformers or Protestants, not only to the establishment of new orders of schools, but, what was vastly more im-

portant, to new and better methods of instruction, springing from a genuine love of knowledge, and ardent feelings of religion and benevolence.

Of both of these we shall speak in the two following chapters, which will bring us naturally, and in due order of time, to the history of Sunday Schools.

CHAPTER XIII.

CHRISTIAN EDUCATION.—FROM THE SIXTEENTH TO THE EIGHTEENTH CENTURY.

BENEDICTINE, CONVENTUAL, AND OTHER CATHO- LIC SCHOOLS.

Of the Benedictine, Conventual, Episcopal, and Cathedral schools, such as they were, we have spoken in a previous chapter. In the thirteenth century, when Gregory the Ninth and Alexander the Third issued their decretals for the renewed establishment of the Cathedral and Conventual schools, for the better education of the people, the Benedictine order of monks were the first to respond, and endeavoured to revive their several institutions for instruction, which, in common with most others, had declined or become wholly extinct during the previous centuries of darkness. So, in like manner, when the Reformation had commenced, it is said by ecclesiastical historians, that the Benedictine order “rivalled the Jesuits in this career of good and glory.” They opened schools in all their con-

vents for the instruction of youth in all the branches of human learning, and through their means, also, were republished many great and imperishable works. But in teaching at this time the doctrines and practices of religion, it was of course as they understood and believed them, — not so much, we regret to add, for the purpose of encouraging their followers in the study of the Bible to ascertain for themselves the will of God, as to fortify the young against the supposed errors and dangers of the Reformed doctrines, and to confirm the faithful in the belief and forms of the Papal Church.

SCHOOLS OF THE JESUITS.

The order of the Jesuits took its rise early in the sixteenth century. It was undoubtedly an effect of the Reformation; and before the close of the century they had obtained the chief direction of the young in every Catholic country in Europe. This manifestly was a source of influence much too promising in its character to be neglected by them. When at the height of their prosperity, they had at one time under their control no less than 669 colleges, and 176 inferior seminaries. It is generally allowed, that their schools were conducted with a more scientific skill, and in better taste, than any of the old Cath-

olic schools. It is said, that in Spain and Italy their schools were for a long time the best. In Poland and Hungary, they were almost the only ones except those connected with convents. Towards their pupils their manner was free, affable, and affectionate, united with much vigilance and solicitude for the preservation of their innocence and virtue. In their general character, however, their schools were scholastic rather than religious; and so far as they were in any degree religious, their tendency was not so much to promote a high standard of moral character, as to that course of conduct by which the end is said to justify the means. Their influence was not limited to Europe; but, through their many and zealous missionaries, it was extended to Asia and America.

THE PIARISTS.

The Piarists, or Fathers of the Pious Schools, deserve a passing notice. They were a religious or monastic order which had its rise in the seventeenth century, and whose members, in addition to the usual conventual vows, added another, namely, to devote themselves to the gratuitous instruction of youth. Like the Jesuits, they were a secular and not a clerical order, and rivalled them in their devotion to religion and education. But, unlike them, they

seem to have been unambitious in their aims, and were wise enough to keep aloof from all political matters. They became numerous and powerful in all the Catholic countries, especially among the Austrians. Their schools were mostly of the Trivial order, but their services in the cause of education were wide-spread and highly useful.

BRETHREN AND CLERKS OF THE COMMON LIFE.

At the close of the fifteenth century, a religious fraternity was founded, which having declined, was in the sixteenth century either revived by, or derived new life from, the Reformation. It had for its title, "The Brethren and Clerks of the Common Life," and none, it is said, were more useful to the Christian cause.

These brethren were divided into two classes. First, the *literary brethren*, or the *clerks*; and the *unlearned brethren*. They lived in different houses, but in the closest bonds of friendship. The *clerks* were devoted to the business of transcribing books, to the cultivation of polite learning, and to the education of poor children of both sexes. They established and taught schools wherever they went.

The *unlearned brethren* labored with their hands, and pursued various mechanical trades.

The *sisters* lived in nearly the same manner; and that portion of their time which was not employed in prayer or reading, they devoted to the education of female children, and to such labors as were suitable to their sex.

The schools of these brethren were held in high esteem, and to them may be traced nearly all the restorers of polite learning in Germany and Holland. They were the first to introduce the study of the ancients, which they highly valued for the good influence which they believed it would have on the growth of pure religion. They continued to flourish after the era of the Reformation, and, though living under the rule of St. Augustine, indirectly, if not directly, aided its progress. After the Jesuits had obtained their ascendancy, they ceased their efforts, and this remarkable brotherhood was brought to a close.

SCHOOLS OF BORROMEO.

Charles Borromeo and his schools belong to this period. He was born in 1538, was made an abbot at twelve years of age, a Doctor of Divinity at nineteen, and the Archbishop of Milan, by the appointment of his uncle Pope Pius the Fourth, at the early age of twenty-two; and died, at the age of forty-six, in 1584. He was pure in life, energetic and noble in action, and

distinguished and honored for his benevolent, Christian, and truly apostolical character. He established libraries and hospitals, founded schools, embellished at his own expense the churches of his diocese, and in seasons of public calamity made sacrifices of his income and fortune for the relief of the sick and the suffering.

Among other things, and for which he should be especially honored in a work like this, was his attention to the religious education of the young. At the very moment when the Council of Trent was assembled to deliberate upon the reform of the Catholic Church, he seems to have commenced a system of religious instruction at his own church in Milan, approaching nearer to the modern Sunday School than any other institution of which we have any account. He may have derived the idea from the primitive schools of the early Christians (the schools for the catechumens), but they were certainly different in their character from either the Episcopal, the Cathedral, or the Conventual schools of the day. We have no distinct account of their organization and character as originally conducted by him, but they are thus described by a modern traveller through Italy: — "It is both novel and affecting to behold on the Sabbath the vast area of the cathedral filled with children, forming

two grand divisions of boys and girls ranged opposite to each other, and these subdivided again into classes, according to their age and capacities, drawn up between the pillars, while two or more instructors attend each class, and direct their questions and explanations to every little individual without distinction. A clergyman attends each class, accompanied by one or more laymen for the boys, and for the girls by as many matrons. The lay persons are said to be oftentimes of the first distinction.

“This admirable practice, so beneficent and edifying, is not confined to the cathedral, or even to Milan. The pious archbishop extended it to every part of his extensive diocese, and it is observed in all the parochial churches of the Milanese, and of the neighbouring dioceses, or such at least as are suffragans of Milan.”

Another traveller remarks, — “That the practice derived from the example of Borromeo, of the religious instruction of children on the Sabbath in the tenets of the Church of Rome, prevails at the present moment, very generally, if not universally, in Catholic countries.”

Rev. Daniel Wilson visited these schools in 1823, and, besides confirming the above account, adds the following interesting particulars.

“A priest sat in the midst of each class, and seemed to be familiarly explaining the Christian

religion. The sight was quite interesting. Tables for learning to write were placed in different recesses. The children were exceedingly attentive. At the door of each school, the words, *Pax vobis*, — ‘Peace be with you,’ — were inscribed on boards; each scholar had a small pulpit, with a green cloth in front, bearing the Borromean motto, *Humilitas*. Now, what can in itself be more excellent than this? But mark the corruption of Popery; the poor children are made members of a fraternity, and purchase indulgence for their sins by coming to school. A brief of the Pope, dated 1609 (five-and-twenty years, be it noticed, after the death of Borromeo), affords a perpetual indulgence to the children, in a sort of running lease of six thousand years, eight thousand years, &c., &c., — and these indulgences are applicable to the recovering of souls out of purgatory; then the prayers before school are full of errors and idolatry. All this I saw with mine own eyes, and heard with my own ears, for I was curious to understand the bearing of these celebrated schools. Thus is the infant mind fettered and chained. Still I do not doubt that great good may be done on the whole; the Catholic catechisms contain admirable instruction, and much evangelical matter, though mixed up with folly and superstition.”

CHAPTER XIV.

CHRISTIAN EDUCATION.—SIXTEENTH TO THE EIGHTEENTH CENTURY.

PROTESTANT SCHOOLS.

EARLY in the sixteenth century (1529), Luther prepared and published a catechism, which was a new and highly important addition to the means of religious education. This, we are inclined to believe, was one of the earliest compendiums of Christian doctrine which had been compiled since the so-called Apostles' Creed. The catechetical mode of imparting religious instruction had generally declined previous to the Reformation. But as this catechism of Luther acquired at once great celebrity, so this mode of Christian teaching was everywhere revived.

As before stated, the Lutherans were not only the founders of many new schools, and the patrons of universal learning and education, but "in the villages they appointed instructors to teach the catechism." And this, as we suppose, con-

stituted a peculiar feature in the educational principles of the Reformers. Religious education with them made a part of their fireside and common school education. They regarded the acquisition of knowledge as the proper and best work of the young, not only on the Sabbath day, but of almost every day in the week. While they were eager and zealous to increase the number of their public schools, to elevate and improve their character, and to establish the principle of Visitation, so, at the same time, they made it a universal principle, that in them the catechism should be taught, and other religious instruction given. In this we are confirmed by the statement of Bakewell, a modern traveller, who, having passed two winters at Geneva, gives the following account of the schools at that place, which may serve as a specimen of the general mode adopted by the Reformers of conducting the education of the young.

“The young,” he says, “are carefully instructed in the *catechism at the schools*, and by means of familiar lectures from their pastors. The Sunday services for the catechumens comprise a recapitulatory explanation of those lectures of the catechism, in which they have been instructed in classes *four days in the preceding week*. Young persons do not commence this

course of religious instruction until about the age of fifteen. The course lasts twelve months; but when the catechumens appear deficient in their examinations, they pass through another course in the following year. The catechumens all write down in their own language the instruction which they receive verbally in their classes. The writing is carefully examined and corrected by the pastor. The youth of both sexes, rich and poor, are expected to attend this course of instruction. There are evening classes for the apprentices."

Another illustration to the same purpose we have in the following statement: —

"In the Pays de Vaud, where there are about six hundred schools, attended by twenty-five thousand children, from seven to sixteen years old, besides a great number of preparatory or private schools, and besides the classes and the means of private instruction for children of opulent families. Every year all these schools are visited; and tables of observations made in the six hundred visits are sent to the Academic Council, in which one of the first magistrates of the state presides; so that the government is acquainted with the condition of the public and religious education throughout the state.

"Young people arrived at the age of fifteen

years all repair to the pastors of their respective parishes, to attend to a more extensive course of Christian instruction through one or two winters. The pastors devote themselves to this task with the most sedulous and hearty zeal, as to the happiest and most useful of their labors. The catechumens are then received to the holy supper, and to the confirmation of their baptismal vows, in a solemn manner, well fitted to excite piety by the means of the ceremony itself, and still more by the touching recollections which it awakens. Thus religious instruction is spread, maintained, and renewed, from the most tender age, for every individual, and without interruption."

We have cited these examples, though of a later period, because they serve to illustrate the course of instruction originally adopted by the Reformers, of which these are but specimens run up from their early seed to an exhibition of their more perfect flower and fruit.

We proceed to describe two or three other classes of schools separate from the more public ones, and which, at about this period, sprung up in Germany. They were among the first and best fruits of the Reformation, and were evidently the precursors of the Sunday School established by Robert Raikes, — schools of piety and benevolence.

SPENER AND HIS SCHOOLS.

Spener was a distinguished Lutheran divine, and a professor of the seventeenth century. He was born at Alsace, in 1635. In 1670 he laid the foundation of that institution at Frankfort on the Maine, which was known by the name of *Collegia Pietatis*.

At this time, the Lutheran Church had fallen, or was fast falling, into a state of lifeless dogmatism. Dogmas and forms were taking the place of true piety. Theological controversy was held in higher esteem than a good life. At this institution, it was the object of Spener to impart to the students and citizens, by lectures on the New Testament, at stated times, theological instruction in a popular and practical way. The laity, at these meetings, were permitted to engage in prayer, to ask questions, and offer remarks; and by these means, and by the instruction he gave, and by the spirit in which he gave it, it was his hope and aim to correct their moral and spiritual faults, to console their afflictions, and to excite within them a deep and well-grounded piety.

In 1789, some young teachers of theology at Leipsic, the friends and pupils of Spener, adopted a similar course. From these combined sour-

ces originated that form of belief which in Germany has borne the name of *Pietism*, because it regarded a pious life as better than much learning, and benevolence and love as of more value than any mere doctrines or systems of theology. *Quietism* in France, and *Methodism* in England, had a similar origin.

While a preacher at the court of Dresden, Spener occupied himself much with the religious education of the young; and, by his teaching and example, revived again catechetical instruction, which thus early had been, once more, well-nigh forgotten. But he not only restored this mode of instruction, but he did something which was far better, and which gave a peculiar character to his system. He infused into it, by precept and example, the true religious element. He taught and enforced the vital truth, that, in the work of instruction, the *spirit* was to be regarded as far, far above the *letter*. This was one of the best fruits of the Reformation, and to Spener and his schools are we indebted for its earliest and best manifestation.

CHARITY SCHOOLS.

At the close of the seventeenth century we perceive the first dawnings of that spirit of Christian benevolence which was the precursor

of those splendid philanthropic movements, Charity Schools, Hospitals, Missionary Societies, improved Prisons, Bible and Tract Societies, and the Sunday School.

Augustus Hermann Franke led the way on the Continent in this career of human good, by the establishment of a Charity School. He was born at Lubeck, in 1663. At fourteen, he entered the University, remained there the usual time, and afterwards studied theology and the languages at Erfurt, Kiel, and Leipsic. Subsequently (1681), after the completion of his studies, he gave lectures at Leipsic on the proper interpretation of the Bible; and at Erfurt was a successful preacher of the gospel. Soon after, he went to Halle, where at first he was a professor of languages, and afterwards of theology.

The ignorance and poverty of which he became the witness at the latter place (1694) filled him with distress. To aid in its relief, he undertook, at first, the instruction of a small number of destitute children, who attended at his own house for the purpose, and where, at the same time, he relieved from his own means their most pressing physical wants. His next step was to make his own house a permanent home for these few orphan children. In this charitable work he was soon and eagerly assisted by some

of the benevolent citizens of Halle. From this time, the number of these orphans under his roof and care was rapidly increased. In 1698 was laid for their use the corner-stone of the first of those buildings (finished in 1700) which at this day form two rows, eight hundred feet long. Money soon flowed in from all quarters, — some through channels the most usual, and some through the most unusual, so that at times it seemed marvellous to his eyes, — by which he was enabled to establish and maintain so large an institution without the aid of government. It bore at first, simply, the name of the *Orphan Asylum*; but afterwards this title was applied to one building and one school only, — while the whole establishment took, and continues to bear, the name of *Franke's Institute*.

The Orphan Asylum has had under its care and instruction, at a time, two hundred orphan children. Since its foundation, it has gratuitously educated five thousand orphan children, — three fourths of whom were boys, and the other fourth girls.

Besides the Orphan School, this institution has three or four other school-departments. One is the *Royal Pædagogium*, for the education of young gentlemen, the profits of which go to the support of the Orphan School. The *Latin*

School is another, for pupils of a less wealthy condition than the former, and who belong to the city of Halle. This department alone has nine or ten classes. Another is the *German Schools*, for girls and boys whose parents do not wish to give their children a learned education. And besides these schools, there is connected with the general institution a large library, collections in natural history and philosophy, and a Bible press, from which more than three millions of the Old and New Testaments have been issued, and sold at a cheap rate. Not less than two thousand pupils have received instruction at this place at one and the same time, — of whom five hundred were in the higher schools. At one time it had one hundred teachers, all of whom had been prepared for their work at this institution.

As this school had its origin in a spirit of the purest benevolence, so it seems to have been conducted on truly enlarged, enlightened, and Christian principles. Franke, with great sagacity, seems to have eliminated from all previous systems of education the living principle of each, and to have formed them here into one perfect whole. Education and instruction by him were not separated, and either the one or the other rejected, but were combined and used together.

The three branches of physical, mental, and religious development were regarded as alike necessary, and claimed and received a corresponding degree of attention. Christian piety was regarded as of the first importance, and religious knowledge as a portion of its necessary aliment. The evil tendencies of the heart were not denied, but fully recognized, watched over, and controlled, with early and deep solicitude. Its pure and good ones were equally acknowledged, and, with a care not less, were called out, trained, fostered, and wisely directed. Love was deemed, if not the only, as at least the most salutary and successful means of discipline ; and, while the intellect and reason received a large proportion of care and instruction, they were educated mainly in view of the predetermined course of each pupil as to his profession or business in after life.

The celebrated Zinzendorf was a pupil of Franke's school, and the father of the sect so well known under the title of the Moravian Brethren. Zinzendorf not only adopted the educational principles of his venerated master, but improved upon them ; and through him, and his zealous and devoted followers, they have been carried to almost every part of the known world, and incorporated, openly or silently, with all the best systems and seminaries of education.

The approach which this sect of Christians had made towards a general system of Sabbath-day instruction, and from which point we gradually slide into the history of Sunday Schools, we may learn from the following account, authentically given us, of the oversight and care which they usually exercised over the young of their congregations.

"Another noticeable and highly creditable trait in the character of the Brethren (Moravian) was their watchful care of the young. The children attached to each congregation were regarded with affectionate interest, and no pains were spared to educate them religiously, and to qualify them to become useful members of society. This was a fundamental part of their economy, maintained with great care, and subjected to the superintendence of the ministers and their assistants. In every place where a Moravian society was established, certain members of the congregation were appointed overseers of the young, who, in addition to their usual occupations, were to visit the children at their homes, to speak affectionately to them, to win their hearts to virtue, and to give them a lovely impression of their Creator and Redeemer."

From this time forth, the old and one-sided systems and views of education seem to disap-

pear. The one class of the schools just described — Spener's — had awakened a deep interest in the necessity and value of a living faith and piety, to be developed by the early training and culture of the religious nature and faculties. The other, — Franke's, — had brought into vigorous action all those benevolent feelings which are the legitimate fruits of the former. The one were designed to awaken a supreme love for God; and the other, as its corresponding element, a true love for man. And both of these found a natural and effective sphere of action in the institution of the Sunday School, — whose origin and progress we are now to trace in Europe and America.

CHAPTER XV.

HISTORY OF SUNDAY SCHOOLS.

CHRISTIAN EDUCATION IN ENGLAND FROM THE FIRST TO THE EIGHTEENTH CENTURY.

IN the preceding chapters, scarcely any allusion has been made to the condition and progress, in the past ages, of religious education in England; for this reason, among many others, — that a much, greater unity of purpose could be obtained by reserving all that belonged to this branch of the subject as an introduction to the history of Sunday Schools.

Christianity had been introduced into England at an early period. In common with most other Christian people, the English, during the dark ages, had their Episcopal and Cathedral schools, similar to those on the Continent, before described. It appears that in every diocese there was one of these schools, each of which was under the care of a *Scholastic*, as the superintendent was called. The studies of all these schools were mainly, as before stated, here as elsewhere, preparatory for the priestly office.

In the ninth century, when Alfred came to the throne, he found the people sunk in the grossest ignorance and barbarism, of which we have proof enough in the single fact that there was not one person or priest at that time, south of the Thames, who could so much as interpret the Latin service. Alfred endeavoured to remedy this deficiency. To this end, he invited from all parts of Europe the most celebrated scholars to assist him ; he became himself one of their pupils, founded a high school at Oxford, endowed it with many privileges, and offered the highest incentives to study and the acquisition of learning. In view of the times, such an example on the part of the monarch was a noble one, and gave a strong impulse to a good cause. But it was not until the year 1200 that the school which he had established at Oxford became a University ; and up to the year 1300 its library consisted of only a few tracts chained or kept in chests in the choir of St. Mary's church. If, at this period, any person gave a single book to a religious house, it was believed that the donor of so valuable a gift merited eternal salvation.

Not far from the same date (1200) the University at Cambridge was established. In 1387, Winchester College ; in 1400, Eton ; in 1560, Westminster and Harrow.

Besides these means of education, which were chiefly for scholastic or religious purposes among the more highly favored, there were the Conventual or Abbey schools, in which, we are told, all the sciences, so far as they were then understood, were taught. In addition, they had their private schools in the principal towns and cities.

This was the general condition of education in England up to the sixteenth century, the era of the Reformation. The influence of that memorable movement was soon extended from the Continent to the sea-girt isle.

Edward the Sixth, that remarkable young prince, who ascended the throne at seven years of age, was the first to feel and carry out some of the great principles of Christianity which the Reformation was the instrument to unfold or revive. Bishop Ridley preached before him on one occasion (A. D. 1550), and spoke at much length on the subject of charity. The king sent for him, thanked him, and requested his advice respecting some acts of charity. The bishop, astonished at the tenderness and pious zeal of the young prince, burst into tears, and asked time for consultation. This led to the establishment of the first truly Christian and charitable institutions in England, or any other part of the world; among others, to Christ's Hospital, or the *Blue*

Coat School, for educating and supporting fatherless children. Stow's simple record of the endowment of this school is in these plain but touching words: — "In the patent the king with his own hands wrote this summe; '4,000 markes by the yeare'; and then said in the hearing of his counsell, 'Lord! I yield thee most hearty thanks that thou hast given me life thus long to finish this work to the glory of thy name.' After which foundation established he lived not above *two daies*, whose life would have been wished equal to the patriarches, if it had pleased God so to have prolonged it." It took the name of Blue Coat School, by which it is most generally known, from the costume of its pupils. On Christmas day, 1552, there were admitted to the buildings selected for its use three hundred and forty "poore fatherlesse children," — and, says Stow, "they stood from Saint Lawrence-Lane end in Cheape towards Paul's, all in one livery of russet cotton, 340 in number; and at Easter next, *they were in Blue*, at the Spittle, and so have continued ever since." Charles the Second connected with it a mathematical school. Within a few years its buildings have been reconstructed, and now present an extensive and magnificent pile. The annual income of the institution is £ 45,000. There are generally six-

teen hundred orphan boys and girls at this establishment, receiving board, clothing, and instruction. At about the same time, and arising out of the same circumstances, were founded the Bridewell for the wilfully idle, and St. Thomas's Hospital for the sick and wounded. These were established a century earlier than the school before mentioned, on the Continent, by the name of the Orphan Asylum or Franke's Institute.


The spirit of the Reformation and of Christian philanthropy, thus commenced in England, continued to advance. In the latter part of the seventeenth century we find that "The Society for promoting Christian Knowledge" was established. Early in the eighteenth century (1702), it is stated, "that, in London and divers other places, this society had caused many schools to be set up, wherein numbers of poor children were instructed, clothed, and educated. They had also caused good books to be distributed, at their charge, in the schools in town and country, in the fleets, among the soldiers, and in prison." We may say in addition, that previously and subsequently to this period there were numerous charitable foundations for educational purposes, which in later times have been the subject of enormous abuses. No general system of instruction, up to this day, has been provided for the children of this extended and powerful empire.

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If we were asked the question, what were the means and methods used at this period by parents and others for the inculcation of religious truth, the best answer we could give, perhaps, would be to state a fact recorded in the life of the celebrated Dr. Doddridge, who was born early in this century (1702). "I was brought up," he says, "in the early knowledge of religion by my pious parents, who were in their character very worthy of their birth and education; and I well remember that my mother taught me the histories of the Old and New Testament before I could read, by the assistance of some blue Dutch tiles in the chimney-place of the room where we sat; and the wise and pious reflections she made upon those stories were the means of enforcing such good impressions on my heart as never afterwards wore out."



Whether there was any compend of religious truths or catechism in common use at this time, it is not easy to decide. The earliest catechism in the English language, of which we have found any trace, was written in the time of Henry the Fifth, about A. D. 1420. It had for its title, "The Master of Oxford's Catechism." This is preserved in an English library, and is so great a curiosity that we must needs give a specimen of it. It was, beyond a doubt,

prepared for, and used at, the Oxford University. The questions are by the "Clerke," or teacher, and the answers by a "Maister," or graduating student.

"*The Clerke's Question.* Say me where was God when he made heven and erthe ?

"*The Maister's Answer.* I say in the further ende of the winde. *C.* What is God ? *M.* He is God that all thinge made, and all thinge hath in his power. *C.* Of what state was Adam when he was made ? *M.* A man of xxx. wynter of age. *C.* Of what lengthe was Adam ? *M.* Of iiij. score and vi. enchys [inches]. *C.* How long was Adam in Paradise ? *M.* vij. yere, and at vij. yeres' ende he trespassed against God for the apple that he hete on a Fridaye, and an angel drive him oute. *C.* Why beryth [beareth] not stonys [stones] froyt [fruit] as trees ? *M.* For Cayne sleugh his brother Abell with the bone of an asse checke. *C.* What is the best thinge and the worste amonge men ? *M.* Worde is beste and worste. *C.* Who cleped first God ? *M.* The Devyll. *C.* Which is the heaviest thinge bering [to bear] ? *M.* Syn is the heaviest. *C.* Of what thinge be men most ferde [afraid] ? *M.* Men be most ferde of deth. *C.* Why is the sun rede at even ? *M.* For he goeth toward Hell," &c., &c.

We subjoin a specimen of the moral proverbs and of the poetry extant at the same period.

“He that in youth no virtu usit
In age all honure hym refusit.

Ever the hier that thou art,
Ever the lower be thy heart.
Deme the best of every doubt,
Tyl the truthe be tryed out.”

Early in the sixteenth century there was a catechism in use, consisting of the Creed, the Lord's Prayer, and the Decalogue, to which were added, as it is supposed by Archbishop Cranmer, in 1549, a few explanations and cautious remarks. Another early compend of the same kind was called the Catechism of Edward the Sixth, entitled, — “A Shorte Catechisme, or Playne Instruction of Christian Learning, sett forth by the King's Maiesties Authoritie for all Scholemaisters to teach.” This was printed in Latin and English in 1553. The first and last of these were evidently designed, the one for the university, and the other for the cathedral or other public schools. So far as parents were able, they might have used either of these for domestic instruction.

In 1643 was convoked the celebrated Assembly of Divines at Westminster, who prepared and published by authority their Larger and Shorter Catechisms. These have exerted a won-

derful influence over the Protestant world, but neither of them was well suited to the capacities of the young, to say nothing of their doctrinal errors. They consist of abstract propositions, which, for the most part, no child can understand. Other catechisms soon followed, whose object it was to simplify the Assembly's, by Dr. Owen, Thomas Gouge, A. Palmer, Matthew Henry, J. Noble, and others, in England, and by Willison in Scotland.

But it is most probable, that up to this time little had been done by most parents for the religious instruction of their children, except that which nature and impulse prompted. Doddridge, as we learn from a volume of his printed works, was, at a little later period than this, calling the attention of parents, as if it were a new thing, to this important subject; and Isaac Watts, who belongs to the same period, and intimately associated with him, was the first to prepare a manual of religious truths truly adapted, in form and spirit, to the wants and capacities of childhood.

Watts was born in the seventeenth century (1674), and early in the next, that is, before he had arrived at the age of thirty, he had composed a great part of those beautiful hymns, which have gone so deep into the hearts and memories of so many millions, both of the old

and the young. In our view, he was the child's greatest benefactor ; and the tribute paid him by Dr. Johnson should always accompany the mention of his name. "For children, he condescended to lay aside the scholar, the philosopher, and the wit, to write little poems of devotion, and systems of instruction adapted to their minds and capacities, from the dawn of years through its gradations of advance in its morning of life. Every man acquainted with the common principles of human action will look with veneration on the writer, who is at one time combating Locke, and at another making a catechism for children in their fourth year. A voluntary descent from the dignity of science is, perhaps, the hardest lesson that humility can teach."

Up to this period, the child had been overlooked, neglected, or considered beneath the care or instruction of the master spirits of the world. Who can tell us, for example, with all his learning or researches, of a single piece of ancient juvenile poetry ? Where, in all the remains of the Homers, the Virgils, the Davids, of ancient literature and song, can we find a hymn to childhood, or a song designed for the infant mind ? Where a ballad or a lay for their especial amusement or instruction ? We ask, probably, in vain. The earliest lines which have come down to us,

written expressly for a child, are those of Robert Smith's, a martyr in Queen Mary's time, and addressed to his own children. They were written by him while confined in prison. As the celebrated John Rogers was the succeeding occupant of the same cell, in which, immediately after his death, these lines were found, they have usually been attributed to Rogers. But, in fact, they were written by Smith. An extract from this poem may be found in Southey's Book of the Church, on whose authority we state the above fact. The opening lines of this piece are familiar to most.

"That you may follow me,
Your father and your friend,
And enter into that same life
Which never shall have end,
I leave you here a little book
For you to look upon,
That you may see your father's face,
When he is dead and gone."

These are the first lines, we have reason to believe, ever written expressly for a child; at any rate, none of an earlier date have been preserved to this day; and the next are "those little poems of devotion," alluded to by Johnson, — those "Divine Songs for Children," — which were composed by Dr. Watts, which have been read in all succeeding time, inwrought into

the world's thoughts and feelings, and which have sanctified more infant hearts, probably, than any other work, whether large or small, except the Holy Scriptures, that was ever written.

His first and second catechisms, which he prepared and published for the use of children, at about the same period (1729 – 30), were a great advance on all previous compilations of the same kind, and are at this day, with the exception, perhaps, of some erroneous statements of doctrine, among the best to place in the hands of childhood. Their effect on the cause of religious instruction in England must have been similar to that of Luther's in Germany and on the Continent.

CHAPTER XVI.

ORIGIN OF SUNDAY SCHOOLS. — IN ENGLAND.

THE dawning light of Christian instruction for all the young was rapidly accelerated, as we have reason to believe, by the publication of the "Divine Songs," and the "Plain and Easy Catechisms for Children," by Dr. Isaac Watts. From this time, good men were seen to rise up, here and there, to hasten on, by their humble but zealous labors, the effulgence of a better day.

The earliest name connected with the religious instruction of children on the Sabbath day in England is that of Joseph Alleine, the author of "The Alarm to the Unconverted," who is called by his biographers the eloquent, the pious, and self-denying Alleine. This must have been as early as the middle of the seventeenth century, as he died in 1668.

"When enervated by bodily disease and cruel imprisonment, he was carried in a litter to Bath, and went about the city on crutches. Notwith-

standing his infirmities, on every Sabbath day he gathered from sixty to seventy children together, and, with the assistance of his beloved wife, — who has recorded the fact, — he taught them the religion of Jesus, and was only interrupted by the persecutions of the age, for the reign of the Medici in Italy and the Stewarts in England were not times friendly to Sunday Schools." The testimony of his wife is in these words. \ After stating that they "carried him to visit all the schools, almshouses, and the goodly poor, especially the widows, — engaging those who were teachers and governors to teach the catechism, buying many dozens, and giving them to distribute to their scholars," she goes on, and says, — "He also engaged several to send their children once a week to him to be catechized ; which they did hearken to him in. And we had about sixty or seventy children every Lord's day to our lodging, and they profited much by his instructions ; till some took such offence at it that he was forced to desist." \

As the next step, we find it stated by Lathbury, the historian of the sect called the Non-jurors, that Frampton, one of their bishops, after resigning his office, about 1693, was living quietly in the country, attending the parish church, *catechizing the children publicly*, and explaining

in the afternoon the sermon which had been preached by the curate in the morning, — “a ministration,” says Lathbury, “which it might have been curious to witness.” This fact must connect the name of Bishop Frampton with those who anticipated the era of Sunday Schools.

The next name which is found in this connection, and in the order of time, is that of the Rev. Theophilus Lindsey, of Catterick. “In the month of November, 1763,” says Mr. Belsham, “Mr. Lindsey took possession of his vicarage of Catterick, fully determined to seek out and accept of no other preferment, and expecting here quietly to have ended his days, though it pleased God in his providence to order it otherwise. He regularly officiated twice on the Sunday in his parish church, and in the interval between the services he catechized the young people.” Mrs. Cappe, whose accuracy can be fully relied on, gives, on this point, the following pleasing details.

“At two o’clock,” says she, “before the commencement of the afternoon service, Mr. Lindsey devoted an hour in the church every Sunday, alternately, to catechizing the children of the parish, and expounding the Bible to the boys of a large school, which at that time was kept in the village. The number of the boys generally

amounted to about one hundred, who formed a large circle around him, himself holding a Bible in his hand, with which he walked slowly around, giving it regularly in succession to the boys, each reading in his turn the passage about to be explained. This method, accompanied by frequently recapitulating what had been said, and by asking them questions relating to it, kept them very attentive, and the good effect of these labors proved, in many cases, very apparent in after life. Mr. Lindsey has been frequently recognized in the streets of London by some of his former Sunday pupils, who gratefully acknowledged their obligations to him. After evening service, Mr. Lindsey received different classes of young men and women, on alternate Sundays, in his study, for the purpose of instruction; and Mrs. Lindsey in like manner, in another apartment, had two classes of children, boys and girls, alternately."

A year or two later, say 1765, Miss Harrison, afterwards Mrs. Catherine Cappe, says, in a memoir of herself, — "I endeavoured to imitate at Bedale [the place of her residence], in a manner however imperfect, the edifying example which I had so much admired at Catterick. I established a sort of Sunday School there, collecting together a number of poor children,

whom I assisted in learning to read, giving them books, &c., teaching them Dr. Watts's shorter Catechism, together with his devotional hymns, and endeavouring to give them such general instruction as might enable them to read the Bible with more intelligence. I had no place in which to receive them but the back kitchen, which being small, we were exceedingly crowded; but they grew attached to me, and liked to attend; and, in order to prevent confusion, I divided them into classes, which succeeded each other; so that on Sunday I was occupied by a succession of children nearly the whole day, except the time which was spent at church."

Another name has been brought forward as that of one who early commenced the instruction of children on the Sabbath day. In the year 1769, a Sunday School was commenced by Miss Hannah Ball, at High Wycombe. She was a lady of great piety, and of rather uncommon earnestness in doing good. Her custom was to assemble as many as thirty or forty children on Sunday morning, to hear them read the Scriptures and repeat the Catechism and Collect, preparatory to going to church. Miss Ball continued this school for many years, and also met the children every Monday to instruct them in the principles of Christianity.

A claim has been put in for still another preceding the time of Raikes, which is contained in the following statement.

+ "In the village of Little Lever, near Bolton, in Lancashire, lived a humble individual named James Heys, more generally known by the familiar appellation of 'Old Jemmy o' th' Hey,' who obtained a hard but honest livelihood by winding bobbins for the weavers in the neighbourhood. So early as the year 1775, he began to instruct the 'poor bobbin boys,' or 'draw boys,' in the elements of learning, namely, spelling and reading. The old man's pupils increased, and, no place of worship being in the immediate locality, he yielded to the general entreaty that he would meet them on a *Sunday*, when they could pursue their simple studies more uninterruptedly. The cottage of a poor neighbour afforded a front room large enough for the purpose, which was cheerfully granted. Here 'Old Jemmy' met his scholars, 'children and young folks,' morning and afternoon, every Sunday, the time of assembling being announced by the ringing, not of a bell, but of an excellent proxy, an old brass mortar and pestle."

The last we have to name is a Sunday School which was established, as we find it stated, by Rev. David Simpson, M. A., at Mansfield, in

1778, — only three years previous to that of Raikes ; but of this we have no particular account.

It was remarked, with as much truth as beauty, by a clergyman of England, at the jubilee of this institution in 1831, "that a happy thought connected with human invention has often gleamed upon the minds of men, like lightning at the midnight hour, then has again disappeared." So in reference to the origin of Sunday Schools. The same thought had gleamed upon other minds before the time of Raikes, — upon Borromeo, in Milan ; upon Alleine, Lindsey, Cappe, Ball, Heys, and Simpson, in England. But these were like the gleams of midnight lightning. They shone but for a moment and disappeared, or their light extended not beyond one diocese, one town, or one church. But, as Grimké of South Carolina remarked, in his address on the same occasion, "Robert Raikes founded them for the church universal. His institution is destined to be coextensive with the habitable globe, and durable as Christianity herself."

ROBERT RAIKES was born at Gloucester, England, in 1735. His father was the printer and proprietor of the Gloucester Journal ; and to this business Robert succeeded. There is no account

that we have seen of the circumstances connected with his education, or the events of his early life. But active benevolence was soon manifested as a leading trait of his character. He commenced his labors of Christian philanthropy as a visiter of the Bridewell, or common prison, in Gloucester. Here he perceived that crime and ignorance were almost invariably associated together in the same person. He employed, therefore, such of the inmates as could read and write to instruct those who could not, that Christian principles might be more effectually communicated to all. The good effects of this course were soon apparent; and it was simply this principle, inwrought deeply into his mind by a long series of observations, applied to a new set of circumstances, that originated the Sunday School.

X It was at the close of the year 1781 that he established his first Sunday School. His attention was originally turned to the subject by a very simple incident. One day he had gone into the suburbs of his native city to hire a gardener. The man was from home, and while Mr. Raikes awaited his return, he was much disturbed by a group of noisy boys who infested the street. He lamented to the gardener's wife the neglected and depraved condition of these children. Her emphatic reply was, — "O Sir, if you were

here on a Sunday, you would pity them indeed ; we cannot read our Bible in peace." This answer operated with the force of electricity, and called into life the undying spark of the Sunday School for the moral and religious education of the young.

"Can nothing be done," he asked, "for these poor children ? Is there any body near *who will take them to a school on a Sunday ?*" At this moment the word "Try" arose in his mind, and was so powerfully impressed there as to decide him at once for action. Some persons were named as suitable for the work, to whom he went immediately, and entered into a treaty with four well-disposed women, at a shilling a day each, to take charge of a certain number of destitute children on the Sabbath day.

Such was the origin of the Sunday School, as conceived in the mind, and brought into universal notice by the labors, of Robert Raikes ; and well might he remark to a visiter, the celebrated Joseph Lancaster, who called upon him in his old age, — "I can never pass by the spot where the word 'TRY' came so powerfully into my mind, without lifting up my hands and my heart to heaven, in gratitude to God, for having put such a thought into my heart."

Within a few years the accuracy of this ac-

count, as a true statement of the origin of Sunday Schools by Raikes, has been seriously questioned by respectable, but, we fear, prejudiced persons, in his own native city. A joint claim has been set up by them for the Rev. Thomas Stock, an Episcopal clergyman (to which sect Mr. Raikes did not belong), in whose parish, in Gloucester, the first Sunday School was commenced. In fact, it would now seem that Mr. Stock had early made the same claim for himself, as we ascertain by a letter bearing his signature, dated 1788, and but recently published. "The undertaking," he says, "originated in the parish of St. John's, in this city, of which I was curate. The fact is as follows. Mr. Raikes, meeting me one day by accident at my own door, and in the course of conversation lamenting the deplorable state of the lower classes of mankind, took particular notice of the situation of the poorer children. I had made, I replied, the same observation; and told him, if he would accompany me into my own parish we would make some attempt to remedy the evil. We immediately proceeded to business; and, procuring the names of about ninety children, placed them under the care of four persons for a stated number of hours on a Sunday. As minister of the parish, I took upon me the principal superintend-

ence of the schools, and one third of the expense. The progress of the institution throughout the kingdom is justly to be attributed to the constant representations which Mr. Raikes made in his own paper of the benefits which he perceived would probably flow from it." Beyond this, the friends of Mr. Stock, several years ago, went so far as to erect a monument in the parish church of St. John the Baptist, in memory of Mr. Stock, with the inscription, that "he originated the idea of Sunday School teaching; and, aided by Robert Raikes, Esq., he set up the first Sunday School," in 1780. A few years since this claim was revived, and a public controversy arose on the subject, in which the testimony of several aged and respectable individuals was brought forward in order to sustain it. But all these statements were improbable, contradictory, or self-refuted. For instance, Mr. Stock himself, in the letter just quoted, admits that Mr. Raikes *met him at his own door*, and *commenced* the alleged conversation which led to the establishment of the first Sunday School. Rev. Mr. Wintle, of Gloucester, at the age of seventy-two, the oldest living scholar of Stock except one, having been called to testify, states, that, according to his belief, Rev. Mr. Stock met Mr. Raikes in *Hare Lane*, where the conversation took

place, and that *Mr. Stock* commenced it, directly contradicting *Mr. Stock's* own statement. Another of the witnesses says that it took place on a *Sunday evening*; another, that it was on a *Sunday morning*. One, that *Mr. Stock* was to have the *superintendence*, and another, that *he was to teach*. A *Mr. King*, who also claims the honor of originating the Sunday School, by means of a conversation with *Mr. Raikes*, states, that *within a month* after that time a school had been established by *Stock*, and articles had appeared in the *Gloucester Journal*; whereas we know that the first article on the subject did not appear in *Raikes's Journal* till 1783, two years after their commencement. It is affirmed, on the monument of *Stock*, that the first schools were opened in 1780, — while no one who has written on the subject has placed their origin at an earlier period than 1781; in fact, the half-century jubilee was fixed, after careful inquiry, for the year 1831, that is, fifty years from the latter date.

The true answer, however, to all these statements and controverted facts is contained in the following authentic letter, written by *Mr. Raikes* in 1783, giving, by request, a detailed account of the origin of the first Sunday Schools. This letter was written to Colonel Townley when the

circumstances were all fresh in the memory of Raikes, before there was any rivalry on the subject, and at a time when there was much less motive to claim the particular honor of originating them than when Mr. Stock wrote, in 1788, five years later.

As the veracity of Mr. Raikes is unimpeached, as they who call in question his claim admit that "in character he was most exemplary, and that he possessed a good heart," and when, above all, we find that his whole life and conversation were truly Christian, this testimony of his, we think, must be final and conclusive.

Mr. Raikes's Letter to Colonel Townley.

"Gloucester, Nov. 25 (1783).

"Sir, — My friend, the mayor, has just communicated to me the letter which you have honored him with, inquiring into the nature of Sunday Schools. The beginning of this scheme was entirely owing to accident. Some business leading me, one morning, into the suburbs of the city, where the lowest of the people (who are principally employed in the pin manufactory) chiefly reside, I was struck with concern at seeing a group of children, wretchedly ragged, at play in the street. I asked an inhabitant whether those children belonged to that part of the town, and lamented their misery and idleness. 'Ah! Sir,' said the woman, to whom I was speaking, 'could you take a view of this part of the town on a Sunday, you would be shocked indeed; for then the street is filled with multitudes of these wretches, who, released on that day from employment, spend their time in

noise and riot, playing at chuck, and cursing and swearing in a manner so horrid, as to convey to any serious mind an idea of hell rather than any other place. We have a worthy clergyman,* said she, 'minister of our parish, who has put some of them to school; but upon the Sabbath they are all given up to follow their inclinations without restraint, as their parents, totally abandoned themselves, have no idea of instilling into the minds of their children principles to which they themselves are entire strangers.'

"This conversation suggested to me that it would be at least a harmless attempt, if it were productive of no good, should some little plan be formed to check this deplorable profanation of the Sabbath. I then inquired of the woman, if there were any decent, well-disposed women in the neighbourhood, who kept schools for teaching to read. I presently was directed to four. To them I applied, and made an agreement with them to receive as many children as I should send upon a Sunday, whom they were to instruct in reading and in the Church Catechism. For this, I engaged to pay them each a shilling for their day's employment. The women seemed pleased with the proposal. I then waited on the clergyman before mentioned, and imparted to him my plan. He was so much satisfied with the idea, that he engaged to lend his assistance, by going round to the schools on a Sunday afternoon, to examine the progress that was made, and to enforce order and decorum among such a set of little heathens.

"This, Sir, was the commencement of the plan. It is now about three years since we began, and I wish you were here to make inquiry into the effect. A woman, who lives in a lane where I had fixed a school, told me, some time ago, that the place was quite a heaven upon Sundays compared to what

* Rev. Thomas Stock. Is not this the origin of his mistake?

it used to be. The numbers who have learned to read and say their Catechism are so great, that I am quite astonished at it. Upon the Sunday afternoon the mistresses take their scholars to church, a place into which neither they nor their ancestors ever entered, with a view to the glory of God. But, what is yet more extraordinary, within this month these little ragamuffins have in great numbers taken it into their heads to frequent the early morning prayers, which are held every morning at the cathedral, at seven o'clock. I believe there were near fifty this morning. They assemble at the house of one of the mistresses, and walk before her to church, two and two, in as much order as a company of soldiers. I am generally at church, and after service they all come round me to make their bows, and, if any animosities have arisen, to make their complaint. The great principle I inculcate is, to be kind and good-natured to each other; not to provoke one another; to be dutiful to their parents; not to offend God by cursing or swearing; and such little plain precepts as all may comprehend. As my profession is that of a printer, I have printed a little book, which I give amongst them; and some friends of mine, subscribers to the Society for promoting Christian Knowledge, sometimes make me a present of a parcel of Bibles, Testaments, &c., which I distribute as rewards to the deserving. The success that has attended this scheme has induced one or two of my friends to adopt the plan, and set up Sunday Schools in other parts of the city, and now a whole parish has taken up the object, so that I flatter myself in time the good effects will appear so conspicuous as to become generally adopted. The number of children at present thus engaged on the Sabbath is between two and three hundred, and they are increasing every week, as the benefit is universally seen. I have endeavoured to engage the clergy of my acquaintance that reside in their parishes. One has entered into the scheme with great fervor; and it was in

order to excite others to follow the example that I inserted in my paper the paragraph which, I suppose, you saw copied into the London papers. I cannot express to you the pleasure I often receive in discovering genius and innate good dispositions among this little multitude. It is botanizing in human nature. I have often, too, the satisfaction of receiving thanks from parents for the reformation they perceive in their children. Often have I given them kind admonitions, which I always do in the mildest and gentlest manner. The going among them, doing them little kindnesses, distributing trifling rewards, and ingratiating myself with them, I hear, have given me an ascendancy greater than ever I could have imagined; for I am told by their mistresses that they are very much afraid of my displeasure. If you ever pass through Gloucester, I shall be happy to pay my respects to you, and to show you the effects of this effort at civilization. If the glory of God be promoted in any, even the smallest degree, society must reap some benefit. If good seed be sown in the mind at an early period of human life, though it shows not itself again for many years, it may please God, at some future period, to cause it to spring up, and to bring forth a plenteous harvest.

“With regard to the rules adopted, I only require that they come to the school on Sunday as clean as possible. Many were at first deterred, because they wanted decent clothing; but I could not undertake to supply this defect. I argue, therefore, if you can loiter about without shoes and in a ragged coat, you may as well come to school and learn what may tend to your good in that garb. I reject none on that footing. All that I require are clean hands, clean face, and the hair combed; if you have no clean shirt, come in what you have on. The want of decent apparel, at first, kept great numbers at a distance; but they now begin to grow wiser, and all are pressing to learn. I have had the good

luck to procure places for some that were deserving, which has been of great use. You will understand that these children are from six years old to twelve or fourteen. Boys and girls above this age, who have been totally undisciplined, are generally too refractory for this government. A reformation in society seems to me only practicable by establishing motives of duty, and practical habits of order and decorum, at an early age. But whither am I running? I am ashamed to see how much I have trespassed on your patience, but I thought the most complete idea of Sunday Schools was to be conveyed to you by telling what first suggested the thought. The same sentiments would have arisen in your mind, had they happened to have been called forth, as they were suggested to me.

"I have no doubt that you will find great improvement to be made on this plan. The minds of men have taken great hold on that prejudice, that we are to do nothing on the Sabbath day which may be deemed labor, and therefore we are to be excused from all application of mind as well as body. The rooting out this prejudice is the point I aim at as my favorite object. Our Saviour takes particular pains to manifest that whatever tended to promote the health and happiness of our fellow-creatures were sacrifices peculiarly acceptable on that day.

"I do not think I have written so long a letter for some years. But you will excuse me; my heart is warm in the cause. I think this is the kind of reformation most requisite in this kingdom. Let our patriots employ themselves in rescuing their countrymen from that despotism which tyrannical passions and vicious inclinations exercise over them, and they will find that true liberty and national welfare are more essentially promoted than any reform in parliament.

"As often as I have attempted to conclude, some new idea has arisen. This is strange, as I am writing to a person

whom I never have and perhaps never may see ; but I have felt that we think alike ; I shall therefore only add my ardent wishes, that your views of promoting the happiness of society may be attended with every possible success, conscious that your own internal enjoyment will thereby be considerably advanced.

“ I have the honor to be, Sir,

“ Yours, &c.,

“ ROBERT RAIKES.”

Another authentic letter of Robert Raikes, dated November 5, 1787, written four years after the preceding, and one year before that of Rev. Mr. Stock, is so simple, clear, satisfactory, and confirmatory of the other, that we cannot withhold it in this connection.

Original Letter from Robert Raikes to Mrs. Harris, Chelsea, England.

“ November 5th, 1787.

“ MY DEAR MADAM, — Amongst the numerous correspondents which my little project for civilizing the rising generation of the poor has led me to address, I have to no one taken up my pen with more pleasure than to you, my old friend, with whom I formerly passed so many cheerful hours.

“ I am rejoiced to find that the people in your neighbourhood are thus ready to listen to that strong and pathetic injunction, given by our Saviour a little before his resurrection [ascension], ‘ Feed my lambs ’ ; and if it were possible for me to afford any hints that might be useful, great would be the pleasure I should receive.

“ In answer to your inquiries, I shall as concisely as possible state, that I endeavour to assemble the children as early

as consistent with their perfect cleanliness, — an indispensable rule ; the hour prescribed in our rules is eight o'clock ; but it is usually half after eight before our flock is collected. Twenty is the number allotted to each teacher ; the sexes are kept separate. The twenty are divided into four classes. The children who show any superiority in attainments are placed as leaders of their several classes, and are employed in teaching the others their letters, or in hearing them read in a low whisper, which may be done without interrupting the master or mistress in their business, and will keep the attention of the children engaged, that they do not play or make a noise. The attending the service of the church once a day has seemed to me sufficient, for their time may be spent more profitably, perhaps, in receiving instruction than being present at a long discourse, which their minds are not yet able to comprehend ; but people may think differently on this point. Within this month the minister of my parish has at last condescended to give me assistance in this laborious work, which I have now carried on six years with little or no support. He chooses that the children should come to church both morning and afternoon ; I brought them to church only in the afternoon. If this should answer better than my plan, on some future occasion I will let you or Mr. Harris know it.

“ The stipend to the teachers here is a shilling each Sunday ; but we find them firing, and bestow gratuities as rewards of diligence, which may make it worth sixpence more.

“ But the success of the whole depends on the attention paid by people of condition. If persons of some consequence will condescend to officiate as visitors, and by kind words encourage the good among these hitherto despised and neglected creatures, and give gentle reproof to those who stray from their duty, a wonderful effect will in a few months be discoverable. Were I among you, I would call forth the gentlemen to visit the boys, and the ladies to superintend the girls. Go to

Brentford, and learn of Mrs. Trimmer ! This is what I should say to the ladies of Chelsea. I would beg leave to recommend the perusal of Mrs. Trimmer's 'Economy of Charity.' It may be had at Johnson's, in St. Paul's Church Yard.

"It had been sometimes a difficult task to keep the children in proper order, when they were all assembled at church ; but I now sit very near them myself, which has had the effect of preserving the most perfect decorum. After the sermon in the morning, they return home to dinner, and meet at the schools at half after one, and are dismissed at five, with strict injunctions to observe quiet behaviour, free from all noise and clamor. Before the business is begun in the morning, they all kneel down while a prayer is read, and the same before dismissal in the evening.

"To those children who distinguish themselves as examples of diligence, quietness in behaviour, observance of order, kindness to their companions, &c., &c., I give some little token of regard, — as a pair of shoes, if they are barefooted ; and some who are very bare of apparel I clothe. This I have been enabled to do, in many instances, through the liberal support given me by my brothers in the city. By these means I have acquired considerable ascendancy over the minds of children. Besides, I frequently go round to their habitations to inquire into their behaviour at home, and into the conduct of the parents, to whom I give some little hints now and then, as well as to the children.

"I was taking a woman to task one day, before her husband, because the house was not so clean as it ought. 'Troth, Sir,' said the man, 'I wish you could come a little oftener ; we should be all the better.' The people tell me they keep their children in more order by the threat of telling Mr. Raikes, than they could formerly with the most severe stripes.

"It is that part of our Saviour's character which I aim at imitating, — 'He went about doing good.' No one can form an idea what benefits he is capable of rendering to the community by the condescension of visiting the dwellings of the poor. You may remember the place without the South Gate called Littleworth; it used to be the St. Giles's of Gloucester. By going amongst these people I have totally changed their manners. They avow at this time that the place is quite a heaven to what it used to be. Some of the vilest of the boys are now so exemplary in behaviour, that I have taken one into my own service. I mention this as an evidence of what may be done.

"But I fear I am growing too prolix, and that I shall cause you to repent the opening of a correspondence with your old acquaintance.

"I must now tell you that I am blessed with six excellent girls, and two lovely boys. My eldest boy was born the very day I made public to the world the scheme of Sunday Schools, in my paper of November 3d, 1783. In four years' time it has extended so rapidly as now to include two hundred and fifty thousand children. It is increasing more and more. It reminds me of the grain of mustard-seed.

"Remember me in kindest terms to Mr. Harris, and believe me, dear madam, both his and your most obedient servant.

(Signed,)

R. RAIKES."

The following resolution, adopted at the general meeting of the Sunday School Society, held July 11th, 1787, is an additional link in the chain of evidence to establish the claim of Mr. Raikes to the honor of originating the Sunday Schools in England. This is contemporaneous exposition.

“Resolved, unanimously, that in consideration of the zeal and merits of Robert Raikes, Esq., of Gloucester, who may be considered as the original founder, as well as liberal promoter, of Sunday Schools, he be admitted an honorary member of this Society.”

It appears that all the Sunday Schools connected with the Established Church in Gloucester refused to coöperate with the other Sunday Schools of that city in the semi-centennial jubilee in honor of their establishment by Robert Raikes. But at the public meeting held by the other schools on this occasion, “Rev. W. Bishop produced many interesting facts, which evidently satisfied the meeting that his intimate friend, Robert Raikes, was the founder of these institutions. Two, who had been pupils of Raikes, were present and addressed the meeting.” The children of these schools wear a large medal, on which is represented the head of their founder, with this inscription, — “ROBERT RAIKES, Esq., THE FOUNDER OF SUNDAY SCHOOLS.”

He died in 1811. Some years afterward a tablet was put up in the parish of St. Mary de Crypt, in Gloucester, with a Latin inscription, the first portion of which is in memory of his parents. The remaining portion is in these words : —

“ Also, of
ROBERT, their eldest SON,
By whom Sunday Schools were first instituted in this
place :
And were also,
By his successful exertion and assiduity,
Recommended to others.
He died on the 5th day of April, A. D. 1811,
Aged 75.”

The motto on the tomb is from Job xxix.
11 – 13: —

“ When the ear heard me, then it blessed me ; and when the eye saw me, it gave witness to me : because I delivered the poor that cried, and the fatherless, and him that had none to help him. The blessing of him that was ready to perish came upon me, and I caused the widow's heart to sing for joy.”

During his lifetime, Mr. Raikes contributed freely of his money and influence for the support and extension of his favorite institution ; he often visited the schools of his own city, aided the teachers in their labors, and expressed and manifested a personal interest in the children individually. The Sunday School was the place most congenial to his happy temper and ingenuous and benevolent heart. “ I cannot express to you,” he once wrote, “ the pleasure I often receive in discovering genius and innate good disposition among this little multitude. It is botanizing in human nature.”

" Spirit of charity ! which guided Raikes,
O, guide thou me to emulate his deeds,
Who, as a friend of youth and Sabbath Schools,
Now shines resplendent as a star in heaven ! "

Such, we believe, is a true and impartial account of the origin of Sunday Schools in Great Britain. Their success and progress we shall attempt to trace in a separate chapter.

CHAPTER XVII.

PROGRESS OF SUNDAY SCHOOLS.—IN ENGLAND, SCOTLAND, IRELAND, &c.

A SATISFACTORY experiment having been made of this plan and mode of instruction in his own city, its founder, Robert Raikes, was desirous that its benefits should be more widely extended. Having a public journal of his own at command, he inserted in it the following article : —

“ Gloucester Journal, November 3, 1783.

“ Some of the clergy in different parts of this country, bent upon attempting a reform among the children of the lower class, are establishing Sunday Schools, for rendering the Lord's day subservient to the ends of instruction, which has hitherto been prostituted to bad purposes. Farmers, and other inhabitants of towns and villages, complain that they receive more injury in their property on the Sabbath than all the week besides. This in a great measure proceeds from the lawless state of the younger class, who are allowed to run wild on that day, free from every restraint. To remedy this evil, persons duly qualified are employed to instruct those that cannot read ; and those that may have learnt to read are taught the catechism, and conducted to church. By thus keeping their minds engaged, the day passes profitably, and

not disagreeably. In those parishes in which this plan has been adopted, we are assured that the behaviour of the children is greatly civilized. The barbarous ignorance in which they had before lived, being in some degree dispelled, they begin to give good proofs that those persons are mistaken who consider the lower order of mankind as incapable of improvement, and therefore think an attempt to reclaim them impracticable, or at least not worth the trouble."

This notice having been copied into the London and other papers, numerous letters for information on the subject were very soon addressed to Mr. Raikes. Among others was the one of Colonel Townley, a gentleman of Lancashire, the answer to which we have given, dated November 5th, 1783. This answer, at the request of Colonel Townley, was published in the "Gentleman's Magazine" of 1784, a journal then of extensive circulation. By this means, the knowledge and nature of Sunday Schools were "diffused with the rapidity of lightning throughout the nation." The principle was no sooner stated than its soundness and utility were at once admitted. It attracted the attention, and excited the highest hopes, of the wise and good everywhere. A passage in the writings of Bishop Horne, the well-known commentator on the Psalms, written at this period, is a strong indication of this feeling. "Dark as the prospect is," says he, "a ray of light has broke in upon it,

and that from an unexpected quarter. An institution has been set up by a private individual, to the excellence of which every man who loves his country must rejoice to bear his testimony. From small beginnings, it has increased and diffused itself in a wonderful manner. The sagacity of the wisest cannot foresee how much good may, in the end, be done by it, and how far it may go towards saving a great people from impending ruin."

Cowper, the poet, in a letter dated September, 1785, writes thus : — " Mr. Scott [the commentator on the Bible] called upon us yesterday. He is much inclined to set up a Sunday School, if he can raise a fund for the purpose. Mr. Jones has had one for some time at Clifton, and Mr. Unwin writes me word that he has been thinking of nothing else for a fortnight. It is a wholesome measure, that seems to bid fair to be pretty generally adopted, and, for the good effects it promises, deserves well to be so. I know not, indeed, while the spread of the gospel continues so limited as it is, how a reformation of manners can be brought to pass, or by what other means the utter abolition of all principle among them, moral and religious, can be prevented. Heathenish parents can only bring up heathenish children."

In December of the same year, the Bishop of

Salisbury writes : — “ A friend, from the commencement, to Sunday Schools, I have established them in every parish where my property lies, and warmly recommended them in my diocese.” In the same year, 1785, the Bishop of Llandaff added his testimony, thus : — “ I have long thought favorably of Sunday Schools, and that experience alone would be the sure test of their utility ; yet I have ventured to take some steps towards introducing them into the large towns of my diocese. I pray God to prosper the undertaking which you have so benevolently set on foot.”

Bishop Porteus early became the friend and patron of Sunday Schools, and promoted their establishment in the extensive diocese of Chester, of which at this time he was bishop.

Adam Smith, who has written so ably on the Wealth of Nations, bore for them this testimony : — “ No plan has promised to effect a change of manners, with equal ease and simplicity, since the days of the Apostles ” ; and the celebrated Wesley wrote, not far from the same period, — “ I am glad you have taken in hand that blessed work of setting up Sunday Schools in Chester. It seems these will be one great means of recovering religion throughout the nation. I wonder Satan has not sent out some able champion against them.”

But the name of WILLIAM FOX is the one most intimately associated with that of Robert Raikes as among the earliest and most efficient friends of Sunday Schools in England. He was the founder of the Sunday School Society in London. He was born at the village of Clapton, in Gloucestershire, in the year 1736. At the age of fourteen, he went to York, where he was placed with a draper and mercer, with whom he served a faithful apprenticeship, and succeeded his master in the business. Soon after his marriage he removed to London. At first, he was discouraged, but subsequently, having entered into the wholesale business, prosperity rewarded and crowned all his efforts. He clothed the children of the poor, and established a daily school. "Long," he says, "before the establishment of Sunday Schools, I had formed the design of universal schools, though by a different method." He met with no encouragement, on account of the magnitude of the undertaking. He called, however, a public meeting for the purpose, about the time when a paragraph from the Gloucester Journal had appeared, describing the object and character of Sunday Schools, by Raikes. He addressed a letter to him, and received a reply before the time appointed for his meeting. This was in 1785. His benevolent plan was present-

ed to the meeting. It was favorably received, advocated by the benevolent Jonas Hanway, and resulted in the formation of a "Society for the establishment and support of Sunday Schools throughout Great Britain." The remarks made by Mr. Fox on the occasion were afterwards embodied in a printed address, and sent out to many gentlemen of influence and benevolence, who were desired to coöperate. The object of these schools, as stated in this circular, was, "to prevent vice ; to encourage industry and virtue ; to dispel darkness and ignorance ; to diffuse the light of knowledge ; to bring men cheerfully to submit to their stations ; to obey the laws of God and their country ; to make that useful part of the community, the country poor, happy, to lead them in the pleasant paths of religion here, and to endeavour to prepare them for a glorious eternity." At the next meeting the plan was adopted, and the "Sunday School Society of London" established. We may add, with regard to Mr. Fox, that, subsequently, he removed to Cirencester, where, the infirmities of age coming upon him, he was accustomed to say, — "Never wish to be old. I am now in the twelfth chapter of Ecclesiastes, and the grasshopper is a burden to me." He died in 1826, aged ninety-one. The names of Raikes and Fox

should go down to posterity indissolubly linked together.

The first report of the society established by Fox was made in January, 1786, and states that five schools were opened in or near London, and the amount of subscriptions was upwards of four thousand dollars. From this time, the establishment of Sunday Schools was rapid, beyond all expectation, and they were found eminently useful wherever they were well conducted. They increased not only in the immediate neighbourhoods of Gloucester and London, but the plan was adopted in large manufacturing towns, especially in Yorkshire. In Leeds alone eighteen hundred children were speedily collected.

The first Sunday School Celebration was held in the parish of Painswick, Gloucestershire, England, in September, 1786, under the direction of Robert Raikes, an account of which we have from his own pen. It embodies important facts. "He selected," he says, "for the purpose a Sunday which from time immemorial had been devoted to a festival that would have disgraced the most heathenish nations. Drunkenness, and every species of clamor, noise, and disorder, formerly filled the town on that occasion. On the day selected for the celebration, it was filled with the usual crowds who attended the feast; but, instead of

repairing to the alehouses, as heretofore, they all hastened to the church, which was filled in such a manner as I never remember to have seen in any church in this country before ; the galleries, the aisles, were thronged like a play-house. Drawn up in a rank around the church-yard appeared the children belonging to the different schools, to the number of three hundred and thirty-one. The gentlemen walked round to view them ; it was a sight interesting and truly affecting. Young people, lately more neglected than the cattle in the field, ignorant, profane, filthy, clamorous, impatient of every restraint, were here seen cleanly, quiet, observant of order, submissive, courteous in behaviour and in conversation, free from that vileness which marks the wretched vulgar. The inhabitants of the town bear testimony to this change in their manners. The appearance of decency might be assumed for a day ; but the people among whom they live are ready to declare that this is a character fairly stated. After public service, a collection for the benefit of the institution was made at the doors of the church. My astonishment," says he, " was great indeed, when I found that the sum was not less than fifty-seven pounds, that is, more than two hundred and fifty dollars."

CHAPTER XVIII.

PROGRESS OF SUNDAY SCHOOLS.—IN ENGLAND.

HANNAH MORE AND HER SCHOOLS.

As a specimen and illustration of the feeling and interest which the idea and usefulness of these schools awakened at the time, and the means and agencies by which they were so rapidly and successfully extended, we offer here an abridged account of the philanthropic labors of Hannah More in this new field of humble usefulness. She was greatly distinguished as a literary lady in her day, and not less so for her sound piety and enlarged benevolence. By her writings and labors she did much to arrest the flood of ignorance and infidelity, which, caused by the French Revolution, was, at that period, inundating her native land.

Having been made acquainted with the gross ignorance and depravity of the peasantry in her more immediate neighbourhood, counselled and assisted by her sisters, she came to the resolution

to do something to remove it. For this purpose, as a beginning, she selected the village of Cheddar, and there commenced her first Sunday Charity School, October, 1789, — eight years after the establishment of the first school in Gloucester, by Raikes. “After the discoveries,” she says, “made of the deplorable state of that place, my sister and I went and took a lodging at a little public house there, to see what we could do, for we were utterly at a loss how to begin. We found more than two hundred people in the parish ; almost all very poor ; no gentry ; a dozen wealthy farmers, hard, brutal, and ignorant. We visited them all, picking up at one house (like fortune-tellers) the name and character of the next. We told them that we intended to set up a school for the poor. They did not like it. We told them that we did not desire a shilling from them, but wished their concurrence, as we knew they could influence their workmen. One of the farmers seemed pleased and civil ; he was rich, but covetous, a hard drinker, and his wife a woman of loose morals, but good natural sense ; she became our friend sooner than some of the decent and formal, and let us a house, the only one in the parish, at seven pounds per annum, with a good garden. Adjoining to it was a large ox-house ; this was roofed and floored ;

and, by putting in a couple of windows, it made a good school-room. While this was doing, we went to every house in the place, and found every house a scene of the greatest ignorance and vice. We saw but one Bible in all the parish, and that was used to prop a flower-pot. No clergyman had resided in it for forty years. One rode over from Wells, to preach once on Sunday; but no weekly duty was done, or sick persons visited, and children were often buried without any funeral service. Eight people in the morning, and twenty in the afternoon, was a good congregation. On a fixed day, of which we gave notice in the church, every woman, with all her children above six years old, met us. We took an exact list from their account, and engaged one hundred and twenty to attend on the following Sunday. A great many refused to send their children unless we would pay them first; and not a few refused, because they were not sure of my intentions, being apprehensive, at the end of seven years, if they attended so long, I should acquire a power over them, and send them beyond sea. I must have heard this myself, in order to believe that so much ignorance existed out of Africa."

Thus far in her own words. The remainder is an abstract of her letters and memoirs. She

engaged for this school a teacher of excellent natural good sense, great knowledge of the human heart, activity, zeal, and uncommon piety ; and also her daughter, of twenty-five years of age, quite equal to her mother in all other points ; in capacity, superior. For the first year, Mrs. More and her sister had to struggle with every kind of opposition, so that they were frequently tempted to give up their laborious employ. At the end of a year, it was perceived that much ground had been gained among the poor, but the persecution of the rich continued. They persevered, however, and on the anniversary of the fifth year the following entry is found in her diary : — “ Bless the Lord, O my soul, for the seed that was that day sown ! Bless the Lord for the great progress of Christianity in that region of darkness, where many have been brought ‘to know the truth as it is in Jesus’ ! ” In another place she remarks, — “ We are now in our sixth year at Cheddar, and two hundred children, and above two hundred old people, constantly attend.” (For the latter she had established a Sunday evening lecture, which she conducted herself.) “ God has blessed the work beyond all my hope.” The nature of this success is mentioned in another place : — “ We had a great number there who could only tell their letters when

they began, and can already read the Testament, and not only say the catechism, but give pertinent answers to any questions which involve the first principles of Christianity."

In 1791, recognizing the hand of Providence in their undertaking and success at Cheddar, they resolved upon attempting an extension of their benevolent efforts, by setting forward other schools in the neighbourhood. This was attended with many difficulties. Some assured them, that the novelties they were introducing would be the ruin of agriculture. Others, more favorably disposed, allowed that they might be good things for keeping children from robbing their orchards. Of one parish she uses this expression : — "They seemed to have reached a sort of crisis of iniquity. Of near two hundred children, many of them grown up, hardly any one had been inside of a church since they were christened." Of another parish she says : — "There were not any boys or girls of any age, whom I asked, that could tell me who made them." . Two mining villages at the top of Mendip particularly attracted their attention. The place was considered so ferocious, that no constable would venture there to execute his office. They were not to be deterred, however, by any consideration of personal danger ; and, beginning to perceive who was

their Help, by the solid improvement which was spreading around them, and particularly by an increasing attendance at church, they did not rest till they had procured the same benefits for these, and, in all, for not less than ten parishes in the neighbourhood where there was no resident clergyman.

Their first step was always to obtain the consent of "the incumbent of the living"; and thus they proceeded; and it was not long before the number of children under their instruction rather exceeded *twelve hundred*; and, at a later period, they increased to *sixteen or seventeen hundred*. The distance from their homes to many of these schools was great, — one of them was fifteen miles from their residence, — requiring a circuit of travel of not less than twenty miles in diameter in order to reach them; so that they were obliged to sleep in the neighbourhood during the period of their visitation.

The part which she took in the instruction of these schools, and her method of teaching, may be gathered from an incidental passage in one of her letters: — "My object is not to make fanatics, but to train up the lower class in habits of industry and piety. I know no way of teaching morals, but by teaching principles; nor of inculcating Christian principles, without a good

knowledge of Scripture. I own I have labored this point diligently. My sisters and I always teach them ourselves every Sunday, except during our absence in winter. By being out about thirteen hours, we generally contrived to visit two schools the same day, and carry them to their respective churches. When we had more schools, we commonly visited them on Sunday." One other sentence should be added to this from another letter : — "It is my grand endeavour to make every thing as entertaining as I can, and try to engage their affections ; to excite within them the love of God ; and particularly to awaken their gratitude to their Redeemer. I have never tried the system of terror, because I have found that kindness produces a better end by better means."

At Blagden she established one of these schools, by request of the curate. Two hundred children were soon collected, whom they found deplorably ignorant and vicious. At the end of two years, Mrs. More received a letter from the wife of the clergyman, he being also a magistrate, in which it was stated, by his authority, "that the two sessions and the two assizes were past, and the third was approaching ; and neither as prosecutor nor prisoner, plaintiff nor defendant, had any of that parish (before so notorious for

crimes and litigations) appeared. Warrants for wood-stealing and other pilferings were becoming quite out of fashion." Yet, strange as it may seem, this did not save her from the most bitter and unrelenting persecution from this very quarter, continued for two or three years, so that the school was from necessity, though reluctantly, relinquished. She was at length, however, acquitted and sustained by her bishop; and, after much and long-continued suffering, her triumph was satisfactory and complete.

It was her custom to give yearly an anniversary feast, generally on the Mendip Hills. Two or more tents were pitched on a hill, the cloth was spread around, and the company was inclosed by a fence, within which, in a circle, the children sat. They all went in wagons, and carried a large company of their own to carve for the children, who sung very prettily in the intervals. The whole company in attendance, at times, was computed to be not less than five thousand. In 1794, one thousand poor children attended this feast at Mendip.

The great obstacles to the prosperity of Sunday Schools at the time to which we have now arrived were, the difficulties of obtaining suitable teachers, and the expense of hiring them. They were then paid at the rate of one shilling

and sixpence and two shillings each, every Sunday, for their services. From 1786 to 1800, the Sunday School Society alone had paid upwards of \$ 17,000 for hired teachers. Before the last-mentioned date, however, the voluntary system of gratuitous teaching had gradually made its way into favor, and from this time forth, having become general, the only material impediment to their full and complete success had been finally removed.

In 1787, the number known to be connected with these schools was about two hundred and fifty thousand. Raikes, writing to a friend, under this date, says, — "The number of children admitted to a state of culture in this short period seems to me little less miraculous than the draught of fishes; and would incline us to think that the prophecy, that 'the knowledge of the Lord shall cover the earth, as the waters cover the sea,' is advancing to its completion." He died in 1811, a period short of thirty years from the commencement of his first school, and he had the sublime satisfaction of knowing, that such was the number of Sunday Schools then in operation, that they actually embraced three hundred thousand children.

On the completion of the first fifty years after their establishment, that is, in 1831, a jubilee

was projected in the fertile imagination of JAMES MONTGOMERY, Esq., the Christian poet and ardent friend of Sunday Schools. It was fixed, by universal consent, for the 14th of September, being the birthday of Robert Raikes, who was their founder a half-century previous.

The day was observed in most of the principal cities and towns in Great Britain and America, by public processions of the young and the old, embracing pastors, parents, and pupils of all ages, by public prayer-meetings and addresses, by festive feasts, and other demonstrations of grateful commemoration. In the city of New York, thirteen thousand children were formed in procession, assembled in the Park, united in the singing of hymns, and afterward returned to their several schools, where addresses were delivered. T. R. Green, Esq., delivered an address to a general assembly in the evening, on the rise and progress of Sunday Schools in both hemispheres. At Boston and Philadelphia there were similar demonstrations. An admirable address was delivered at the former place by Rev. E. S. Gannett, and at the latter by Thomas S. Grimké, of Charleston, S. C. In Great Britain, a beautiful jubilee medal was provided, and worn by the pupils; on one side of which was the inscription, — "Robert Raikes, Esq., Founder of Sunday Schools, born at

Gloucester, September 14th, 1736." On the reverse, — " Sunday School Jubilee, September 14th, 1831," — inclosed within a wreath of laurel, and other emblems. The following is the Jubilee Hymn, by James Montgomery, and sung at Exeter Hall, in London.

" Let songs of praise arise,
Teachers, your tributes bring;
Let hallelujahs fill the skies,
Earth with hosannas ring.

" Once by the river-side
A little fountain rose ;
Now, like the Severn's seaward tide,
Round the broad world it flows.

" One heaven-directed mind
Revealed the simple plan ;
Now, in the glorious task combined,
Ten thousand are one man.

" Though poor and mean the place,
And small the beam he taught,
Millions since then have shared the grace ;
Behold what God hath wrought !

" Through Albion's ocean-isles,
In near and distant lands,
Where'er the Christian Sabbath smiles,
The Sabbath School-house stands.

" Heralds of peace ! proclaim
The year of jubilee ;
Now, in the Babe of Bethlehem's name,
Bid every child go free."

On that ever-memorable day there were, in the British empire alone, one million two hundred and fifty thousand pupils, and one hundred thousand teachers.

CHAPTER XIX.

PROGRESS OF SUNDAY SCHOOLS.—IN WALES, SCOTLAND, IRELAND, &c.

SUNDAY SCHOOLS were commenced in Wales as early as in the year 1789. In three years from that time, their progress had been such that one hundred and seventy-seven schools had been opened, containing eight thousand children. They were aided by the Sunday School Society in London. In July, 1799, the Committee informed the Society of their intention, "if possible, to print an edition of the New Testament in the Welch language; a measure which they had much at heart, being convinced of its great propriety and necessity; that the knowledge which had been acquired in Sunday Schools might be directed to the Scriptures, which are of infinite importance to the bodies and souls of men." There is good reason to believe that this want of the Scriptures, created by the establishment and progress of Sunday Schools in Wales, led to the formation of the British and Foreign

Bible Society, in 1804. Their great and rapid increase in this portion of Great Britain may be inferred from the single fact, that there were connected with them, in the year 1826, sixty thousand children of one sect alone.

In Scotland, the need of such an institution was not felt so early or so strongly as in England and Wales ; and for very obvious reasons. For it appears that as early as in the year 1696 a statute was passed by the Scottish parliament, which made provision for common schools for all the children of the people, and which became, as Dr. Curran affirms, " so corrective, that in 1800 there was no country in Europe in which, in proportion to its population, so small a number of persons fell under the prosecution of the common law as in Scotland ; whereas in 1694, that is, only two years previous to the passage of this statute, it is stated historically, that, besides a great number of poor families very meanly provided by the church-boxes, and others, who from bad food fall into disease, two hundred thousand of the people were begging from door to door, and that licentiousness and misery were the most obvious characteristics of a large portion of the population." It seems that these parish schools taught not only reading and writing, but supplied also much religious instruction.

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On this account the want of Sunday Schools was not so much or so quickly felt here as elsewhere, and, in consequence, their establishment was delayed. Rev. Dr. Burns, of the Baron Church in Glasgow, however, states, "that in 1782 the Sabbath Schools in Glasgow and in the Barony parish were established, and I believe they were begun before we had received the information of what was done by Mr. Raikes. I know I regularly attended those in Calton in 1782." And the Rev. Dr. Brown, in a discourse at Edinburgh, before the Sunday School Union, says, — "that at the time when the schools of Raikes were first formed, there were many schools in Scotland of a superior order; the object of which was to communicate solely religious instruction; and the first place which had the honor of instituting them was the city of Glasgow; and that Scotland has the honor, as he thinks, of instituting the first Sabbath Schools in Protestant countries, *for the purpose solely of religious instruction.*"

However this may be, which is not very improbable, from the circumstances in which Scotland was placed in regard to her common schools, it is certain that not many Sunday Schools on the plan of Raikes had been established there before 1797, when the "Edinburgh

Gratis Sabbath School Society" was formed, — and, soon after, "The Aberdeen Sabbath Evening School Society"; from and after which period similar societies and similar schools were established in most of the populous places in Scotland.

Most of the Sunday Schools in Scotland are held on the *evening* of the Sabbath day, from six to eight o'clock; and the communication of religious instruction is their sole object, as their pupils have all been taught to read the Scriptures before they are admitted to the Sunday School. The hour adopted, at which the sessions of these schools are held, so different from that of all others, arose from a practice which had long prevailed among the Presbyterian clergymen, of catechizing their young people in the principles of Christianity on the Sabbath evening, long before the time of the Sunday Schools; and it may be, that it is to this practice to which Dr. Brown refers, when he says, — "that at the time when the schools of Raikes were first formed, there were schools in Scotland of a superior order, the object of which was to communicate solely religious instruction."

The establishment of Sunday Schools in Ireland is of a later date than in any other part of Great Britain. It was not until 1809 that a

Sunday School Society was organized for that country. We find, that in 1825 there were under its care schools to the number of seventeen hundred, containing one hundred and fifty thousand scholars. The London Hibernian Society came in as early, if not earlier, in aid of the cause, which, in the year 1828, had schools to the number of two hundred and seventy, embracing within its care fifteen thousand children.

Beside these laborers in the field, which we have reason to think were Protestant, there are in Ireland many Catholic Schools, conducted by various "Religious Brotherhoods." Among the number, are the "Brothers of the Christian Schools," the "Sodality of the Christian Doctrine," and the "Nunnery Schools," the latter of which instruct girls only.

The Sodalities, or, as they are sometimes called, the Confraternities, are societies of catechists. Each confraternity has its own particular rules and regulations, approved by the bishop of a diocese. It is made their duty to watch over the moral welfare of each other, and to attend every Sunday in the chapel, and instruct the children in the catechism. A "lending library" of religious books is usually attached to each of these confraternities.

In addition to the schools under the care of these Sodalities, there are, it is said, but few chapels in Ireland in which religious instruction is not imparted on Sundays to the Catholic children of the parish. For this purpose, the teachers of their day-schools are employed. The attendance of children is extremely numerous. An eyewitness states, that on one Sunday, in a single city, he saw upwards of four thousand children assembled for this purpose in four chapels. The instruction is exclusively catechetical.

In 1803 "THE SUNDAY SCHOOL UNION" was established at London, — whose operations are extended, as we suppose, over all the schools connected with the Established Church. The formation of this society gave great activity and permanency to the cause of Sunday Schools throughout the British empire. In 1825, there were connected with this Union about eight thousand schools, seventy-five thousand teachers, and eight hundred thousand pupils. In 1836, the actual number of pupils reported was 1,548,890.

In addition to these, the Dissenters have numerous and excellent schools, whose pupils, if we had their number, would much enlarge this noble aggregate.

CHAPTER XX.

PROGRESS OF SUNDAY SCHOOLS. — ON THE CONTINENT.

PASSING from Great Britain across the Channel to the Continent, we find but few facts as to the early introduction of Sunday Schools into France. Raikes says in one of his letters (1787), — "Some French gentlemen, members of the Royal Academy, were with me last week, and were so strongly impressed with the probable effects of this scheme of civilization, that they have taken all the pieces I have printed on this subject, and intend proposing establishments of a similar nature in some of their parishes in the provinces, by way of experiment." But to their establishment and progress in this country there were many obvious difficulties. A school, however, was pretty early (1825) connected with the Protestant church in Paris, at which two hundred children attended, and which was encouraged by some of the most wealthy and influential Protestants of the capital, who sent to it their sons and daugh-

ters. Beyond this, in 1826, an association was formed in Paris "for the encouragement of Sunday Schools." Subsequently, other schools were established at Charenton, near Paris, at St. Pierre, at Calais, and at Calmont, near Toulouse ; but generally their progress was much impeded by the condition of the people, and the restraints under which the cause of education was laid by the influence of the University and the Catholic party.

From the following account given by Rev. Charles Brooks, in a recent number of the Christian Examiner, we have a pleasing and interesting picture of the general condition of religious education among the Protestant people of France, who are said to number at the present time a million and a half of souls.

"In Europe," he says, "all religious immunities and ecclesiastical rights are more minutely defined than with us ; and this appears among the French Protestants. Each church and community has its own school, elementary as well as religious ; its own Bible and Tract Societies ; its own Sunday School ; even its own hospital ; and almost its own bookstore. As no citizen of France can be married unless he has joined the church and partaken the Lord's Supper, it becomes necessary to institute schools on purpose

to prepare the young for their first communion. Each pastor prepares two such classes in a year. On the appointed Sabbath, the young catechumens, between the ages of fourteen and twenty, enter the church in procession, the females dressed in white, having veils over their heads instead of bonnets, the males having a white ribbon tied round the left arm. The sermon is appropriate to the occasion, and at its close they are appealed to with a power of eloquence which fills every eye with tears. They are then admitted by the clergyman to the church, having publicly assented to the creed. At the last service we attended in Paris, we saw fifty-one males and fifty-three females thus admitted. On the next Sabbath after admission, they partake of the Lord's Supper; the table being placed in the centre of the church, with the pastor at its head, the communicants approaching in companies, and standing while the bread and wine are administered."

SUNDAY SCHOOL AT NISMES, IN FRANCE.

In addition to the above general account of the Protestant modes of religious education in France, we subjoin a more particular statement, translated from an authentic work, giving the rules and regulations of the church and Sunday School at Nismes.

“That duty which is felt to be most serious and important by the conductors of the church at Nismes is, on account of the influence that it may exercise over the advancement of the kingdom of God in the souls of those who are confided to them, the instruction of the catechumens, or Sunday School scholars.

“Their number every year is considerable, since the average generally is not less than two hundred and fifty, namely, boys one hundred and twenty, girls one hundred and thirty. The term of instruction always commences with the first Sunday in November, and continues seven successive months, terminating with Reception day, or the day when they are admitted for the first time to partake of the Lord's Supper, which is invariably fixed for the first Thursday after the second Sunday in Pentecost.

“This instruction is both of a public and private character.

“The catechumens of the first class are taught by two pastors. One of them has the boys under his care and direction. These he meets at the church every Sabbath day, at three o'clock, P. M., during the whole term, and there conducts a course of doctrinal instructions, by question and answer, prepared for all the children belonging to the church. The other directs the instruction

of the girls, and, in addition to this, conducts through the year the children's service, to be mentioned hereafter.

"The week-day lessons are given on Monday and Wednesday afternoons, to the boys at two o'clock, and to the girls at seven, in a hall set apart for the purpose.

"In addition to this public instruction, they have one male and one female teacher, chosen with care as possessing a gentle but deep piety, mingled with a zeal enlightened and active, whose duty it is, on every day excepting those on which instruction is given by the pastor, to assemble these children at their own houses, to teach the catechism to those who cannot read, of which the number unfortunately as yet is more than half, and to hear the recital of it from those who are able to learn it themselves. They are to watch with care over their conduct and manners, and to give to each those familiar counsels, those minute and personal directions, which cannot so well be made the subject of general and common instruction. They are to assist also at all their lessons, and are a powerful aid to the pastors in maintaining order and silence among all their pupils.

"The catechism in use at Nismes is that composed by Rev. M. Vincent, which has passed

through several successive editions. That of M. Frossard, which is a collection of well-chosen passages from the Holy Scriptures, is also used, but only as subsidiary to the other.

“Each pastor is accustomed, usually at his own house, or at other houses in the city, especially at the Protestant boarding-school houses, to have meetings of their catechumens in small numbers, to whom he gives a course of religious instruction in writing. Generally his method is to furnish them with a few simple notes, or heads of discourse, which are given to them to analyze. Sometimes it is by verbal questions, to which they are to furnish written answers. Many of these pupils distinguish themselves by their intelligence, their taste for religious studies, and for the perspicuity of their ideas as exemplified in the analysis of their lessons. Some of them go so far as to give a highly satisfactory summary of the sermons which they have heard in the temple. All become sincerely attached to their pastors, who in turn become their best friend; and the case is by no means rare in which this tender relation is continued to an advanced age, and sometimes, though not so often, to the end of life.

“The admission (Reception) of the pupils to the communion is preceded by a visit to the

home of each pupil, always before Easter, by the pastor, to whom while there he gives additional instruction ; and by two examinations, the one upon *moral character*, and the other upon *doctrine* ; which takes place before a committee appointed for the purpose by the Consistory, assisted by the pastors.

“In the first examination, of *character*, the father and mother of each pupil are sent for in turn, and interrogated when the child is not present. They inquire minutely, but kindly, of his conduct at home, of his industry, and of his obedience ; whether the child is attentive to prayer night and morning ; whether he requires urging in regard to his Sunday or week-day religious lessons ; whether he lives on good terms with his brothers and sisters ; and whether, finally, they have remarked such a change since the commencement of this course of instruction as to indicate that he is now disposed to partake of the Lord’s Supper. This interview is terminated by addressing words of counsel to the parents themselves, such as to watch over the companions of their children, sending them constantly to the adult or Sunday School, and, finally, by an example on their own part of attention to public worship and daily prayer. These exhortations are never without their fruit.

Several fathers profit by the occasion to mention their just complaints; in which case the children are sent for to the temple, where they are reprimanded with kindness, but with firmness. Some of them are sent back for another term, but rarely are any definitely excluded.

"The examination on *doctrines* is made for the boys and girls separately, but before the same persons who conducted the one just described, and during the first two days in Reception week. Each pastor in turn interrogates several of the pupils whom he has instructed, and far enough, since two entire hours are consecrated to each of these two sessions, after which the Consistory decides upon their fitness for the holy communion.

"A pastor, one of the catechists of the school, then announces their decision to the pupils, and addresses a few, but final, remarks to them in presence of the Consistory, which is terminated by prayer.

"On the Thursday following, at nine o'clock, A. M., the girls in the large temple, and the boys in the small, are admitted to ratify their baptismal vow, after which, all the assembly remaining, they participate immediately in the sacrament of the Eucharist.

"The pastors who gave the public course of

instruction receive them to communion, and, on the evening of the same day, they are all reassembled in the temple, where, after a service of thanksgiving, they present themselves anew in perfect order, two by two, before the holy table, to receive a New Testament, presented by the Bible Society, and a printed certificate, ratifying the formulary of their baptism.

WORSHIP FOR CHILDREN.

“ Although the instruction given to the catechumens is extensive, regular, and varied, according to their different degrees of intelligence, the Consistory has nevertheless thought that it was insufficient; and the means which they have adopted to secure a more solid development of their religious character has been the establishment of a religious service adapted to the young, celebrated on every Wednesday, at the small temple, at eleven o'clock, A. M.

“ All the scholars of the schools meet there, accompanied by their teachers, male and female, who watch over them and prescribe the most absolute silence. Places are reserved for children who do not belong to the schools of the Consistory. In this manner the temple is beautified by an attendance of four or five hundred young auditors, to whom the pastor (sometimes ascend-

ing the pulpit, but more frequently standing behind the holy table, or walking in the aisles) speaks as a father, explaining to them, sentence by sentence, the word of God, in a language brought down to their comprehension. They are thus accustomed to "remember their Creator in the days of their youth," to answer the religious questions addressed to them, to pray for each other, and to sing the praises of God in common. So Jesus Christ, who blessed little children, and, as they approached him, laid his hands upon their heads, cannot but regard with love those young plants cultivated in his name, and warm and renew them with his own regenerating spirit."

The attempt to introduce Sunday Schools into Germany, after the manner of Raikes, has not met, we believe, with much success, probably for the reason that religious instruction there is made an important part of their very perfect day-school system. But, if we may credit the following statement made by Friedlander, in his "Sketch of the Poor in Germany," — and there is no reason to doubt it, — Sunday Schools have been established in some portions of that widespread country by another agency, and one alike original and successful.

By his statement, it appears, "that a respectable ecclesiastic, by the name of Kindermaun, founded a Sunday School in the village where he resided, in 1773. This was in the province of Bohemia. Its object, originally, was improvement in church music. In this manner he drew the attention of parents, and, by degrees, created schools. His example was followed by others. Kindermaun was encouraged, and at length ennobled for his labors by Maria Theresa, who even levied a fee in favor of these schools.

"At first there were but fourteen thousand, out of a population of two hundred thousand, who received this instruction. But in 1789 they reckoned 158,766, out of two hundred and fifty thousand, who were instructed by them. Crime began immediately to diminish, which led to the establishment of similar schools in other parts of Austria, and different kingdoms of Germany. The result was, that from 1789 to 1798 there were only 765 criminals. In the ten years previous there were 1,523 criminals, which exhibits a diminution of crime by more than one half."

The Sunday School institution at length has been extended, not only to these countries, but to almost every portion of the habitable world, — to Holland, Switzerland, India, Ceylon, West

and South Africa, New South Wales, Palestine, Greece ; to the South Sea Islands, Malta, the West Indies, Canada, Nova Scotia, Newfoundland, and to the United States of America ; the origin and history of which, in the latter place, we reserve for a separate chapter.

CHAPTER XXI.

RELIGIOUS EDUCATION IN AMERICA.

INTRODUCTORY.

THE settlement of New England, in 1620, was commenced under peculiar, but highly favorable, circumstances. Had its colonization been attempted at a much earlier period, or by a different class of persons or believers at the time it was, the whole condition and history of the colonies would, in all human probability, have been essentially changed, to the disadvantage of their character and growth.

The period in English history from 1550 to 1620 was a remarkable one. Through the influence of the Reformation, a wonderful impulse had been given, during this period, to the cause of education, learning, and vital religion. Its natural effect was, to produce a state of dissatisfaction with, and opposition to, the Established Church, to its formal observances, to its rituals and vestments, and to all its many outward cor-

ruptions and forms. It was felt, and openly said, by a large and intelligent body of persons, that the Church was but "half reformed"; and these not only desired, but hesitated not to express the desire for something more simple and *pure*; and hence the name which they obtained, of Puritans. This profession and action on their part brought down upon them the heavy arm of authority, and even bloody persecution. To avoid these, and to escape from the old and corrupt institutions by which they were surrounded, — to find a new land, where they might breathe a purer moral atmosphere, and obtain a more perfect religious freedom, — the freedom to worship God in primitive and Christian simplicity, — they left their own, their native land, and sought finally an asylum in the wildernesses of America, where all was fresh and new, — and where "the great advantage of *beginning* well was secured."

Religion, pure and undefiled, was that which above all other things they valued most. And ~~next~~ to that was learning; and, in leaving the firesides and homes of their forefathers, and landing on these desolate shores, it was their first object to secure for themselves these two essential things, and which, as a most precious legacy, they might bequeathe to their children, and through them to their latest posterity.

Accordingly we find, that the first act of the Massachusetts Colony, who came over in 1630, immediately after landing and attending to their own safety and subsistence, was to provide for the ministry ; and the next, for the education of their children. The second entry which is found on the public records of the town, now city, of Boston, is, — “that brother Philemon Pormont [or Purmont] shall be entreated to become scholemaster for the teaching and nurturing of children among us.” In one of the earliest laws made by the colonists on this subject, occurs this remarkable expression, — “to the end that learning may not be buried in the graves of our forefathers.” “Within ten years,” says Dr. Dwight, “a college was endowed by them and established.” This was in 1638. “For a like spirit under like circumstances,” says President Quincy, in his History of Harvard University, “history will be searched in vain.” In the same spirit, this college at Cambridge was dedicated to “Christ and the Church.”

The truth is, our ancestors came hither with their minds and hearts full of this subject. Religion in all its truthfulness and simplicity, its freshness and power, was to them the greatest and best of all possessions. They were deeply imbued with the necessity and advantage of “be-

ginning well "; and faithfully and well did they improve the opportunity.

In 1642 in Massachusetts, and in 1650 in the Plymouth Colony, we find it was ordained by law, that the selectmen of the towns should see that "every parent or master instructed the young members of his family (whether children, apprentices, or servants) in so much learning as would enable them perfectly to read the English tongue, and have a knowledge of the capital laws ; that once a week he should catechize them in the grounds and principles of religion ; and that every young person should be carefully bred and brought up to some honest, lawful calling, labor, or employment." By this law they endeavoured to secure, by a vigilant inspection on the part of the public authorities, the attention of parents to this important duty. To aid and stimulate them in the discharge of it, a law was passed in 1646, that "if any child or children above sixteen years old, and of sufficient understanding, shall curse or smite their natural father or mother, he or they shall be put to death, *unless it can be sufficiently testified that the parents have been unchristianly negligent in the education of their children.*"

As another indication of the same intense interest on the subject of religious education, we

have the fact, that among the first things ever printed in the colony — at Cambridge, by Daye, in 1641 — “was a Catechism agreed upon by the elders, at the desire of the General Court.”

In furtherance of the same great purpose, the religious culture of the young was made a part of ministerial duty. In 1650, says Rev. E. M. Stone, in his *History of Beverly*, “the parish minister visited the families of his charge at least once in each year, or gathered the children at some convenient place for catechetical instruction.” And this practice was not confined to a single town, but the “catechizing of youth” was found among the common stipulations made with clergymen at the time of their settlement. They generally made use of the Assembly’s Catechism, and in their parochial visits the whole family was assembled, and parents as well as children were catechized by them. A venerable clergyman of this vicinity, in writing to me on this subject, says: — “But some ministers thought that they could improve upon this manual, as you will see by the titles of catechisms which I possess. I. *Spiritual Milk for Boston Babes*, by John Cotton, Boston, 1656. II. *Watering the Olive Plants*, by John Fiske, Chelmsford, 1657. III. *Brief Summe of Chief Articles*, by Marigena Cotton, Hampton, N. H., 1663. IV. *Brief Cat-*

echism, by John Norton, 1666. V. First Principles of Doctrines of Christianity, by James Fitch, Norwich, Conn., 1679. VI. Foundation of Christian Religion, by William Perkins, 1682. VII. Short Catechism, by Samuel Stone, Hartford, Ct., 1684. VIII. Short Catechism, by James Noyes, Newbury, 1714." We have also seen another, entitled "The Well Instructed Child," by Phillips, 1738.

In 1647 a law was enacted in Massachusetts, the earliest of the kind to be found on the records of any Christian people, providing for the establishment of public schools for every town containing fifty families. A similar law was passed in Connecticut in 1660, and a proposition for the same in Plymouth Colony was made in 1663, which was carried into effect in 1672. In a letter from Edward Rawson, dated 1665, who was then Secretary of the Commonwealth, we find this testimony on the subject of these schools. "There is by law enjoined a school to be kept and maintained in every town; and for such towns as are of one hundred families, they are required to have a grammar school. The country is generally well provided with schools." These laws laid the foundation for the New England system of free schools.

The spirit which was carried into these

schools by their teachers, as we might have naturally supposed from what has been said, was a religious spirit. A glimpse of this may be caught from the following testimony of a pupil, which he bore to the character of a teacher who commenced his work earlier than 1650, and continued it through and beyond the seventeenth century. As sectarianism was then unknown, so no fear of it in the schools existed. This pupil noticed particularly the religious spirit of his teacher, and his "care to infuse sentiments of piety into the scholars under his charge, that he might carry them with him into the heavenly world. He so constantly prayed with us, every day, and catechized us every week, and let fall such holy counsels upon us; he took so many occasions to make speeches to us that should make us afraid of sin, and of incurring the fearful judgments of God by sin; that I do propose him for imitation."

In 1709 it was recommended in a Boston report that committees of visitation should be appointed; which was the origin of our present system of school committees. In this report, the same object, religious instruction, is kept carefully and closely in view. It says, — "And at their said visitation One of the Ministers by turns to pray with the Scholars, and Entertain

'em with some Instructions of Piety Specially Adapted to their age and education."

The principal books used in the common schools of the day were of a religious character. Among these were the Bible, New England Primer, and the Psalter, or selections from the Psalms. No manual for arithmetic was then in use. The sole dependence for learning its rudiments was the master's rules and sums in manuscript. Neither grammar nor geography was then taught. Our aged friend, before referred to, who states the above fact, says that in 1781 the books in use "were only and exclusively the New England Primer, the Psalter, the Testament, the Bible, with Dilworth's Spelling-Book." We have seen a copy of the New England Primer bearing the date of 1777. Few of the present day have any knowledge of this memorable little work. The first six pages contained the alphabet, the a, b, abs, and words from one to five syllables, for spelling-lessons. Then followed questions, such as, "Who was the first man? *Ans.* Adam," &c., &c. Then came the Lord's Prayer and the Apostles' Creed; then Dr. Watts's Cradle Hymn, "Hush my dear, lie still and slumber," and other instructive verses for children; among them, "Now I lay me down to sleep." Then a rude picture of

John Rogers burning as a martyr, attended by his wife and children. Then followed two Catechisms, the Assembly's Shorter, and Cotton's, entitled, "Spiritual Milk for American Babes, drawn out of the Breasts of both Testaments for the Soul's Spiritual Nourishment." Then, in conclusion, there was a poetical dialogue between Christ, a youth, and the Devil. Such were the contents of a book placed in the hands of every child at school, and the subject of almost exclusive study for many years. It doubtless exercised a great, and, upon the whole, a salutary influence.

Either the Saturday or Monday forenoon of each week — in some places the one, and in some the other day — was devoted in these schools to the recitation of the Assembly's Catechism, the Ten Commandments, and the Lord's Prayer.

This course of instruction, embracing so many elements of a moral and religious character, was continued through the whole of the eighteenth century. But as early as the beginning of the nineteenth century, as nearly as we can learn, other books were introduced, of a less religious character, such as Webster's Spelling-Book, the American Reader, the Columbian Orator, and the Ladies' Accidence. These gradually displaced

the Bible, the Primer, and the Psalter, and with them the religious exercises at the commencement or close of each week. The wars of the American and French Revolutions, and other causes, had introduced a laxity of feeling on the subject of religion ; sects had sprung up and multiplied ; the new order of books, above referred to, had been prepared and introduced ; and imperceptibly this great change in the character of education had been made without much, if any, opposition.*

Not far from the same time, the practice of catechetical instruction was discontinued, generally, if not wholly, by the clergy. This was occasioned by various causes, such as the diversity of manuals, the greater number of families

* Rev. Thomas Thacher, of Dedham, in a sermon preached at the ordination of Rev. Joseph Tuckerman, at Chelsea, in 1801, says, on this subject : — “ The reading of the Scriptures in schools is either wholly neglected, or reduced to an inferior and disgusting part of puerile duty. In the place of the Scriptures are substituted a collection of dramatic writings, of orations, of poetry, and of novels. Some of these contain moral merit, and might with advantage be partially introduced ; but others are replete with lax sentiments, with obscenity and profaneness ; and they naturally tend to destroy simplicity, both of language and morals. The idea that they are introduced to succeed the Scriptures is giving them a very improper and dangerous preference.” Indeed, the whole sermon is aimed at the alarming tendencies which were then prevailing towards skepticism and infidelity, growing out of the causes alluded to in the text.

in a parish, the difficulty of assembling the children together, and the increased diversity of religious opinions. The practice was continued in the First Church in this city to a later period than in almost any other. Dr. Clark observed it in his lifetime once a month; and we are authorized to say, that, in imitation of him, it was continued by Rev. Dr. Pierce, of Brookline, up to the time of the opening of his Sabbath School, in 1826; and there were others, here and there, who maintained the custom, after, perhaps, the year 1800; but generally, at that period, the practice had fallen into much neglect or entire disuse. One writing on this subject remarks, — “I distinctly remember the serious impressions it made upon me; and I never left the place of meeting without resolving to be a better boy.” But others testify, that, such was the cold, severe, and formal manner of this catechetical service, that it was “much more honored in the breach than in the observance.”

By these two remarkable changes, the whole responsibility of the religious education of children, after a lapse of nearly two centuries, and with a weakened sense of obligation, was thrown back entirely upon parents and guardians. The more conscientious and religious continued, undoubtedly, to discharge it with some good de-

gree of fidelity ; but, for the most part, the attention given to it was limited, both in kind and degree. A mother's prayers and early counsels, the reading of the word of God on the Sabbath day or evening, the instruction of the pulpit, addressed, however, mostly to the understanding of adults, constituted the sum and substance of the best culture, and in the best societies and families. In charity, we draw a veil over the deficiencies, we fear, of the greater number at this period ; consoling ourselves with the idea, that mental instruction, the leading object of the public schools, was moral in its general tendencies, and religious in its remoter results.

Such was the condition of religious education among the people of New England, from the commencement of their history down to the beginning of the present century, and previous to the establishment of Sunday Schools.

In the middle and southern portions of the country, a different state of things existed from the first. The earliest settlers there came not out from the same portion of the mother church ; nor did they leave her bosom for these shores for the same causes. For the most part, they were either Catholics or cavaliers, who, by reputation, certainly, had neither the same love for learning, nor the same ardor for piety. Sir William Berke-

ley, governor of Virginia, in writing home to his government in 1671, thus divulges the whole secret of the matter. "I thank God there are no free schools nor printers, and I hope we shall not have them these hundred years, for learning has brought disobedience, and heresy, and sects into the world, and printing has divulged them, and libels against the best government; God keep us from both!" This unquestionably was the real feeling of the arbitrary and bigoted government at home, and that which was carefully fostered and perpetuated by them amongst this portion of the colonists. Some of these colonies, however, had their colleges, to qualify the few for a professional or literary life, and family tutors and private schools for the education of children belonging to the more wealthy families; but they were without those common schools by which, as in New England, all were taught to read, to acquire the elements of a good English education, and the first principles of religion. Subsequently to the Revolution, in some of these States a better state of things was beginning to prevail; but when we come, in the next chapter, to trace the origin of Sunday Schools in this country, we shall see, that, such was the essential difference in the mental preparation of their children, that it led to an early adoption by

them of these schools on the more secular plan of Raikes, and to a material difference in their religious aspect from those which were established at a later day in New England, where the want of the Sunday School, except for a religious purpose, was scarcely felt.

CHAPTER XXII.

ORIGIN AND PROGRESS OF SUNDAY SCHOOLS. — IN AMERICA.

SUNDAY SCHOOLS, as we have seen, had their origin in England in 1781. At that time, the conflict for national independence, which had commenced in 1775, was going on between the American colonies and the mother country, England. All friendly communication, as a matter of course, was suspended, and it is probable that even the knowledge of the Sunday School institution was, at that time, unknown to this people. At all events, a season of sieges and battles, of bloody victories or desolating defeats, attended with constant alarms and exposures, was not a time for the establishment of Sunday Schools, for attention to moral and religious culture, or the peaceful pursuits of learning and education. But as soon as that contest was over, and its object secured, it was natural that such a people as ours, with such views of liberty, order, and government as they entertained, having for their basis

the intelligence and virtue of the aggregate population, should turn their attention, at the earliest moment, to the subjects of education and religion.

At the North, during this whole period of trial and sacrifice, the common school system had been, in some partial or good degree, sustained ; but elsewhere, in the middle and southern portions of the country, but little had been done for the education of the rising generation. It was there, accordingly, that the need of the Sunday School, or something like it, was the soonest and strongest felt ; and there, as we shall see, it had its origin in this country.

Hooker The first Sunday School of which we have any knowledge in this country was the one established by Ludwig ~~Thacker~~, as early as the middle of the last century, that is, preceding the schools of Raikes in England by thirty or forty years. This was in the town of Ephrata, Lancaster county, Penn. This school was conducted and continued by ~~Thacker~~ for more than thirty years. It appears that after the battle of Brandywine, the hall in which it was kept having been turned into a hospital, the school was discontinued. In 1783, Bishop Asbury, it is said, organized a school of this kind in Hanover, Va. But these, like the schools of Lindsey and others in England, were isolated cases, and of

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which we have no particular or satisfactory accounts.

But in December, 1790, a meeting was held in the city of Philadelphia, "for the purpose of taking into consideration the establishment of Sunday Schools for that city." At this time the city had no system of free schools. This meeting was attended by Bishop White, Dr. Benjamin Rush, Matthew Carey, and many other distinguished philanthropists, whose names do so much honor to the annals of that benevolent city. At a meeting on the 26th of that month, a constitution was adopted for "The First-Day or Sunday School Society." On the 11th of January, 1791, the officers were elected and the society fully organized. Bishop White was made its first president, and continued to act in that capacity for forty years or more.

The first school of this society was opened in March, 1791. The object of the society is thus stated in the preamble to their constitution: — "Whereas, the good education of youth is of the first importance to society, and numbers of children, the offspring of indigent parents, have not proper opportunities of instruction previous to their being apprenticed to trades; and whereas, among the youth of every large city, various instances occur of the first day of the week, called

Sunday, — a day which ought to be devoted to religious improvement, — being employed to the worst of purposes, the depravity of morals and manners: It is therefore the opinion of sundry persons, that the establishment of Sunday Schools in this city would be of essential advantage to the rising generation; and for effecting that benevolent purpose they have formed themselves into a society."

One of their first acts was to petition the legislature for the establishment of free schools, in accordance with the constitution of their State. But they petitioned in vain. During their first year, they increased the number of their Sunday Schools to three, each of which contained nearly two hundred scholars. In 1792 they voted the sum of ten pounds, to be laid out in small moral books, to be lent to the scholars or given as premiums to the most deserving. In 1793 the society voted, "that the instructions to be given in their schools should be confined to reading and writing from the Bible; but for such scholars as had not learned to read, spelling-books and primers might be used." By this rule it was understood that oral religious instruction was denied to the scholars; and no other good seems to have been contemplated than improvement in the common rudiments of reading and writing, and decency

of behaviour. In 1797 they obtained an act of incorporation, under which they continued their three schools in operation up to the year 1816, when Sunday Schools were established on the present voluntary and improved system. From that time, their fund was appropriated to defraying the expenses for manuals, rents, &c., of those free schools. In 1800, which is the last date of which any return is given, more than two thousand scholars had been admitted to the schools of this society; and the total amount of their receipts had been nearly eight thousand dollars. It is stated on good authority, that many of the most worthy citizens of Philadelphia had been indebted to this society for most, if not all, the education which they had ever received.

In 1797 a Sunday School was established at Pawtucket, R. I. It was commenced at the suggestion of Samuel Slater, Esq., by Mr. Collier, then a student of Brown University, Providence; but who became better known afterward as a Baptist clergyman at Charlestown, Mass., and a minister at large in the city of Boston, much esteemed for his benevolence and piety. Mr. Slater was the proprietor of a factory village in Pawtucket, the first of the kind established in the United States, and this school was opened for the instruction and benefit of its many opera-

tives. We are led to suppose, from the nature of the case, that this school, like those in Philadelphia, was designed mainly for secular, rather than solely for religious, instruction.

It is said, that in 1803 a Sunday School was opened at Hudson, N. Y. Of this, however, we have been unable to obtain any particular account.

In 1809 a Moral Society was formed in the city of Pittsburg, Penn., for the suppression of vice, reformation of manners, and the propagation of useful knowledge. A benevolent individual of this society suggested the advantages of a school for religious instruction on Sundays, and such a school was accordingly instituted, on the 22d of August, 1809. The school was opened on the first Sabbath in September, and attended by two hundred and forty scholars, children and adults. This school was constituted without the knowledge of the mode of organization in Europe, and coincided in its principal features with the schools now established.

In 1810 a Sunday School was commenced in Beverly, Mass., by two young ladies, Joanna Prince and Hannah Hill. The latter died, March, 1838. The former is still living, at Brunswick, Me., the respected lady of Ebenezer Everett, Esq. They collected a number of children, voluntarily and without remuneration, for

the purpose of giving them instruction on the Sabbath day. They continued this school without aid for many years, but at length it was merged in the Sunday School connected with Rev. Dr. Abbot's society, when that was established, at a much later period.

In 1811, Rev. Robert May, who had been a Sunday School scholar in London, but who was then residing in Philadelphia, proposed, in a letter to the Evangelical Society of that place, the establishment of Sunday Schools; "produced," it is said, "specimens of tickets, and developed a plan." It is averred that he had no knowledge of the school at Pittsburg. An association was thereupon formed, a school-house built, and a school collected on the 20th of October, 1811, which was conducted under the superintendence of Mr. May himself, until his embarkation for Europe, in the spring of 1812. This school in other accounts is called a *free* school, by which is meant, we suppose, a school on the present plan of gratuitous teaching; and in this respect differing from the paying system then in operation under the "First-Day or Sunday School Society."

In 1812 the first Sunday School was established in Boston. The idea was suggested by the school in Beverly, instituted, as we have

seen, in 1810. The teacher of a week-day charity-school, supported by the ladies of the West Parish, — Rev. Dr. Lowell's, — having learnt, on a visit to Beverly, the plan of the Sunday School there, proposed, in addition to her week-day instructions, to adopt a similar course for her school on the Sabbath day. The plan was approved by her pastor and patrons, and immediately carried into effect. This course was steadily pursued until the year 1822, when, the parish Sunday School having been established, her pupils from that time became members of that for religious instruction.

In 1812, we have authority for saying, a Sunday School was commenced at Brunswick, Me., and in 1813 another by a gentleman at Albany, both of which were successfully continued for some time.

In June, 1814, two benevolent ladies of New York opened in that city a school of this kind, for adults and children, in which were collected eighty or ninety pupils.

In the autumn of the same year, 1814, a school was established at Wilmington, in the State of Delaware; and another at Cambridgeport, Mass., in connection with the Rev. Thomas B. Gannett's society.

In 1815, the Salem Street or Christ Church

Sunday School, in Boston, was instituted. For some length of time this school had the reputation of being the first established in this country solely for religious instruction. But the one at Beverly and that of the West Parish in Boston must take precedence of it in point of time. It must be admitted, however, that the Salem Street school was the first to enjoy any public or extended notoriety ; and no sooner had the knowledge of it become general, than, though designed only for the parish, children flocked to it from all parts of the city to avail themselves of its peculiar privileges. In six months from its commencement the pupils numbered two hundred and fifty. It continued to prosper for many years under its indefatigable superintendent, Mr. J. W. Ingraham.

In the same year, 1815, schools on the new plan were commenced in the Northern Liberties of Philadelphia, which in a few months contained no less than five hundred pupils. In 1816 they were generally introduced, and connected with most of the parishes in that city ; and subsequently, by the formation of the "Sunday and Adult School Union," they were rapidly extended to all parts of Pennsylvania, so that, in 1824, the society had under its care seven hundred and twenty-three schools, seven thousand teachers, and fifty thousand children.

In the summer of the same year, 1816, the Third Baptist Sunday School, connected with Rev. Dr. Sharp's society in Boston, was opened by the ladies of that parish. This was among the very earliest commenced in this city, and soon after, more schools of the same kind were organized, in connection with other churches of that denomination.

The city of New York claims, and is entitled to, the honor of having formed the *first society* in this country for the organization and encouragement of Sunday Schools; and this honor, moreover, belongs to ladies. "The Female Union Society, for the Promotion of Sabbath Schools," was formed by the benevolent ladies of the several denominations in that city, convened by public invitation, January 24, 1816. A constitution was adopted, and schools for the instruction of females immediately opened. In 1825 it had thirty-eight schools, 528 teachers, and 3,052 scholars, under its care and supervision.

In February, 1816, the gentlemen of New York held a public meeting in emulation of the ladies, and on the 26th of the same month the "New York Sunday School Union" was instituted; and schools for boys immediately put in operation. During the first year more than six-

teen hundred scholars entered their schools. In 1825, they had fifty-eight schools, 616 conductors, and 4,430 scholars.

Not far from the same time, 1816, was organized the "Boston Society for the Moral and Religious Instruction of the Poor"; under whose auspices the cause of Sunday Schools was prosecuted with much vigor. The first school which it opened was the Mason Street Sunday School, in 1817, which has always maintained a high reputation, under the superintendence of S. H. Walley, Esq., with whom has been associated at times Mr. J. F. Bumstead, whose zeal in the cause of education is well known and justly appreciated. In a very few years, this society had established in the city fourteen schools, with one hundred and seventy-nine teachers, and sixteen hundred children; and we are led to believe that through its influence schools of this character were soon connected with all the churches of the denomination (Orthodox) which it represented in the State.

In 1824, having for its basis "The Philadelphia Sunday and Adult School Union," was formed "THE AMERICAN SUNDAY SCHOOL UNION," designed to embrace all the unions and all the schools connected with the churches calling themselves Evangelical in the United States.

The operations of this Union are on an extended scale, having auxiliaries in every State, depositories, a publishing committee, agents, missionaries, magazines, and other means to advance the cause of these institutions ; and by its agency Sunday Schools have been established in all sections of this wide-extended Union. In 1831 it reported as in connection with it seventy thousand teachers, and seven hundred thousand children. We may affirm with safety, that at the present time its number is more than twice as large, or one million and a half of scholars. Its annual expenditures are not far from *seventy thousand dollars*.

After a careful and full survey of the subject, we arrive at the conclusion, that the first Sunday School established in this country solely for moral and religious instruction was the school at Beverly, Mass., connected with the Rev. Abiel Abbot's parish, and instituted in 1810. The second was that of Rev. Dr. Lowell's parish, opened in 1812. These, both, were societies or parishes of Liberal Christians. Another Sunday School in the same denomination was established at Cambridgeport, in 1814, and another at Wilton, N. H.; as early as 1816. In June, 1818, a Sunday School was commenced, at the suggestion of

Rev. Dr. Parker, at Portsmouth, N. H., on the most liberal principles, and destined to exert a wide and salutary influence, by the much lamented N. A. Haven, Esq., whose name and praise are in all our Sunday Schools. From his intercourse with the poor, he had early become persuaded that much of the misery and vice of society was to be traced to a neglect of the moral and religious instruction of the young. He was, therefore, induced to open this school, which depended for its support on the society of the South Parish in Portsmouth, Rev. Dr. Parker's, but received all children that chose to resort to it. It was filled at once.

The instructions of this school were carefully adapted to the capacities and wants of the individual children. They were given kindly, and with affectionate interest, by a large number of zealous teachers; and the children in their turn soon became interested, both in their instructors and in what they were taught. The effect on society was visible in less than four years. Children, who, at the beginning, had been received squalid and ignorant, and who would have remained so, were gradually led to become careful and thoughtful; while those who had come at first better prepared, from their domestic relations, were carried onward faster and further than

they would have been by any culture at home. It was, indeed, a humble instrument, but one which diffused much improvement and happiness, acting often on the character of parents hardly less than on that of the pupils, and extending a valuable influence even to the teachers themselves.

Mr. Haven was interested in few things, during his life, more than in this Sunday School. And this might well have been anticipated. The number of children who received its instructions was very great, and though he had excellent friends, who coöperated with him earnestly, he was its moving and governing spirit. That he felt the responsibility, and was much excited by it to exertion, there can be no doubt. There were found among his papers many prayers that he offered up for it; great numbers of memoranda which he used in his instructions; many hints for its improvement and instruction; and an excellent practical address which he delivered before its teachers, to explain to them its duties, and to urge them to zeal and activity. The extent and ability of these services will be better appreciated if we consider that this school was among the first established in this country, and especially of those devoted to moral and religious instruction. The course over which he was to pass was

nearly untrodden ; and yet the plan of it, and the principles upon which it was based by the lucid and religious mind of Mr. Haven, have scarcely been improved upon or extended since that period. The address above referred to is among the first, perhaps, ever delivered in our own or any other country, in relation to this important subject ; and yet few, if any, subsequent performances surpass it in soundness and depth of principle, or in beauty and truth of expression. His correspondence, also, did much to remove prejudice, and to advance the cause of Sunday Schools.

"Mr. Haven," says Professor Ticknor, to whose Memoir we are indebted for the substance and language of the foregoing remarks, "it is true, sometimes acted on larger masses of the community and in more extensive relations ; but for efficient practical usefulness, few persons have done more than he did in this humble school ; and the condition and character of a great number of children, to whom, in a course of eight years, he patiently and discreetly communicated this best and most unostentatious of charities, will long bear witness to the value of his services, which cannot be mistaken."

The books used in this school, as selected and arranged by Mr. Haven, were, Hymns for Infant

Minds ; Prayers committed to Memory ; Watts's Shorter Catechism and the Commandments ; Watts's Historical Catechism ; Cummings's Scripture Questions ; Lessons from Scripture ; and, for the eldest class, Porteus's Evidences ; Paley's Natural Theology ; Watts's Improvement of the Mind ; and Mason on Self-Knowledge."

He died in 1826. "The expression of anxiety and sympathy throughout the community, as he lay on his sick-bed, was remarkable. The very children, as they passed his house, stepped lightly, and were even hushed in their sports ; and men in the resorts of business spoke anxiously to each other, when they spoke of their coming loss. When he was buried, the principal stores and shops in the town were shut." A marble monument of great neatness and beauty has since been erected in the burial-ground at Portsmouth, with these simple and touching inscriptions : —

" Erected
To the memory of
NATHANIEL A. HAVEN, JR.,
Born, Jan. 14, 1790,
Died, June 3, 1826,
By the
Teachers of Sunday Schools
In Massachusetts and Portsmouth, N. H.,
1832."

On the reverse, —

“ He was a disciple of Him
Who ‘took little children
In his arms, and blessed them.’ ”

This school is still continued, and has been, and is, highly prospered. John F. Foster has been its superintendent for twenty-six years. The average attendance of its pupils has been two hundred and twenty. Up to 1843, the whole number of teachers which had been connected with the school was one hundred and ninety-one, of whom eighty-three had been pupils. The whole number of scholars whose names had been entered upon its register was two thousand one hundred and sixty-nine, of which sixteen hundred had remained “long enough to have lessons of good ineradicably impressed on their minds.”

In 1823, the Hancock Sunday School was established. This was the first commenced in Boston, by Liberal Christians, for the religious instruction of the poor and destitute. Soon after the erection of the Hancock School-house by the city authorities, for a public grammar school, one of its principal rooms was procured for the use of this school on the Sabbath day, which was thereupon immediately opened in that building, and hence its name. This move-

ment was made by the "Association for Religious Improvement," then recently formed in this city, and of which Rev. Henry Ware, Jr., was the life and governing spirit. He never ceased to entertain a strong interest in the success of Sunday Schools, and for the advancement of which he exercised constantly a wise and beneficent influence. We now recall with pleasure one or more able articles which appeared in the *Christian Examiner*, and which he wrote in their behalf. Moses Grant, Esq., was its first superintendent, and performed the duty for some length of time, with his usual energy, ability, and success. Mr. Wm. P. Rice followed, and remained two years. Rev. F. T. Gray succeeded these two gentlemen, and performed the duties of the office for six years, with much faithfulness and ability. He was the first, so far as we know, to make a general address, at the commencement or close of the school, a regular and important portion of its exercises. During his whole connection with the school, he made this a cherished part of his duty, and afterwards published a selection of them under the title of "The Teacher's Gift to his Pupils"; and this, for its simplicity and adaptedness to the capacities of children, was long a favorite book in our juvenile libraries, of which two large

editions were printed. He delivered, also, a number of addresses on the advantages of the Sunday School, and the duties of teachers, before the instructors and friends of this school, which afterward were given to the press. These, at that period, did much to excite a warm and lively interest in the moral and religious culture of the young.

The managers of this school early instituted and conducted public semiannual examinations, which were attended by its patrons, and the parents of the children. By this means, the advantages and importance of Sunday Schools were more widely diffused among our religious friends, and their prejudices removed. The children, on these occasions, recited their hymns and portions of Scripture, and were usually addressed by some one of the attending clergymen. A layman who was present at one of these meetings remarked, — "This is a beautiful sight, and one I cannot witness without tears." From the favorable impressions thus produced, other schools in connection with the Unitarian denomination were soon and rapidly multiplied.

The first of these was the Howard Sunday School, which was commenced in a building on Merrimack Street, in the year 1826, in connection with the ministry of Dr. Tuckerman to the

poor. It was a branch of the Hancock Sunday School. In 1828 it was removed to a building erected for that ministry, in Friend Street ; and in 1837 to the Pitts Street Chapel, a still more eligible building, erected for the same purpose, the lower story of which was expressly designed for the perpetual use of this school. It is now among the most prosperous and useful of all our Sunday Schools. The room is fifty feet by forty, furnished with semicircular seats, with maps of Palestine on rollers, and other conveniences, in the most approved style. It comprises, on an average, at least two hundred and fifty pupils ; and the number of its teachers is not usually less than fifty. Elijah Cobb, Esq., has been its superintendent for eighteen years, and is entitled to great credit for the perseverance, fidelity, and skill which he has manifested in the management of this important institution. He has been assisted by R. W. Bayley, Esq., and others. More than three thousand pupils, we are told, have passed through the school since its first establishment ; and having been of that class who most need, and who usually are most benefited by this kind of instruction, these thousands cannot fail in after-time to rise up and call those blessed who have been the favored instruments of imparting light to their minds, and com-

fort and strength to their immortal souls. It should be stated here, that Rev. Mr. Gray, on leaving the Hancock School, connected himself with the ministry at large, and, as successor to Rev. Dr. Tuckerman, labored with energy and devotion for the poor and their children in connection with this chapel for six years. He was succeeded by Rev. R. C. Waterston, who with like ability and zeal devoted himself during five years to the same cause.

The Sunday School connected with the Twelfth Congregational Society in Boston was commenced by its pastor, Rev. Samuel Barrett, as early as 1825, the year of his settlement over that new society. But it was not fully organized as a Sunday School until the year 1827. Benjamin Seaver and Lewis G. Pray were elected its first superintendents. They still occupy that situation, assisted by Francis Brown, Esq. This school has, at all times, been highly prospered, under the vigilance and devotion of its pastor and teachers.

Its average number of pupils has been two hundred, a register of which has been carefully kept and preserved. The average number of its teachers has been forty. More than one thousand children have received its faithful instructions, and the striking testimony of its superin-

tendent is, that of this whole number, most of whom have remained in the city, not more than one or two have forfeited the confidence of their friends or society by any open departure from moral and religious duty.

The vestry of the church in which this school is held is a model for a Sunday School room. Its ceiling and walls are painted in fresco, the panels of which are delicately shaded and filled in with Scriptural mottoes, so that the pupil's eye can fall upon no part of the room without resting upon some one of the great and fundamental principles and doctrines of our holy religion. It is furnished with settees and chairs painted to correspond with the other decorations of the room. It has also large and well selected libraries, both for children and adults.

The school connected with the Warren Street Chapel in this city is another which is deserving of particular notice. The building was erected by subscription, for the ministry to the poor. The school is held in five of its rooms, — two in the basement, two on the ground floor, with the attic for the boys, which is a large room used also for the library and cabinet of natural history. These rooms are open on both parts of the Sabbath day, where the children are instructed in the usual manner, by a large number of

competent teachers. The second story of the building is thrown into a single hall or chapel, and there, during the usual hours for religious service in the forenoon, the children, to the number of five or six hundred, assemble for instruction and worship.

Besides these services on the Sabbath, they have a sewing school for girls one afternoon in the week, — singing schools for both sexes, — a school in winter evenings for apprentice boys, who are taught the elementary branches of knowledge. They have also a reading-room, a library, and a cabinet of natural history. This chapel and school were projected by Rev. C. F. Barnard, who has the oversight and charge of the whole as minister to the poor, and, assisted by others, is preacher to the little flock, and general superintendent of the schools. It may be regarded as a human beehive for intellectual and moral culture, and a most interesting and useful establishment.

The Barton Square Sunday School, at Salem, is also entitled to particular mention. The society worshipping in the Barton Square Church, of which Rev. James W. Thompson is pastor, have erected, at the suggestion and under the direction of the Hon. S. C. Phillips, in the rear of and connected with their church, a

chapel for the use of their Sunday School. It is of brick, semicircular or elliptical in its form, perfectly well ventilated and lighted, and is finished and furnished in the most beautiful and perfect manner. Its walls are painted in fresco, — the idea of which was suggested by Mr. Phillips, — and its panels are filled with most appropriate mottoes from Scripture. Its seats correspond with the form of the room, very conveniently constructed ; in the recess behind the desk of the superintendent are large and highly finished maps of Palestine on rollers, imported from England expressly for the school ; and nothing can exceed its conveniences, the excellence of its general design, and the execution of the whole work. Mr. Phillips, though largely engaged in commerce, in the business of legislation, and in other departments of usefulness and honor, never fails, when at home, to discharge his duty as a superintendent of this Sunday School. He has also prepared and published for the use of these institutions an excellent hymn and service book.

These few schools have been thus particularly noticed, not so much because they are superior to others, as because they were better known to the writer, and would best illustrate one or two improvements which are more particularly connected with them.

In November, 1827, the SUNDAY SCHOOL SOCIETY was established and organized, and the Rev. Joseph Tuckerman, D. D., chosen president. The first public meeting of this society was held in the month of November, and under its more immediate influence Sunday Schools have been opened in every parish in the city, and in almost all the parishes in the Union, composed of Unitarian Christians.

In 1835, the last year for which it has gathered or published any statistics, returns were made to it from 135 schools, containing 2,388 teachers, and 13,795 children. The number of the schools in the city is eighteen, having about 450 teachers and 3,000 pupils.

This society holds a public meeting annually, when a report from its corresponding secretary is read, and addresses made. These have ever been occasions of great interest, and have done much for the furtherance of the Sunday School cause. Eighteen annual reports have been published, embodying a large amount of useful information, and many important suggestions, facts, and principles for the advancement of moral culture and religious instruction.

In 1831, this society observed the semi-centennial Jubilee of the Sunday School Institution, by a discourse from Rev. E. S. Gannett, — which

was published at the time, — and by other appropriate services in the Federal Street Church. The occasion was one of profound interest.

At another public meeting of this society, convened for the purpose, in 1837, Rev. Dr. Channing delivered a discourse before them, "On the Sunday School." This was a gifted performance of this great divine. It was immediately published in the *Christian Examiner*, and also as a tract, by which means it has had an extensive circulation, and it may now be found in all his printed works, and should be the careful study of every Sunday School teacher.

There is an agency employed by this society, differing materially in its character and purposes from those connected with any other union or societies of a like kind. One or more persons — they are now eight in number — are appointed annually by the directors, whose duty it is to visit and address Sunday Schools, parents, teachers, anniversary and other meetings, whenever and wherever they may be invited, — which duty on their part is performed as a labor of love, their travelling expenses being their only charge to the society. They have visited and addressed in this way more than one hundred schools in Maine, New Hampshire, Massachusetts, Rhode Island, New York, Pennsylvania, Kentucky, and

other States. The society prints tracts of a juvenile character, which are distributed freely and gratuitously to the children of the schools visited by its agents, and to the more distant ones which they may not have an opportunity to visit.

After the resignation of their first president, the Hon. Jonathan Phillips was elected, and served one year. In April, 1832, Rev. Dr. Tuckerman was reëlected as his successor, and remained in the office till the time of his decease in 1840. This society had a large place in his regards, and with signal fidelity and zeal he cherished and maintained its usefulness and character to the end. He was succeeded by Dr. J. F. Flagg, and on his resignation, at the end of a year, the Hon. Stephen C. Phillips, of Salem, was chosen (1842), who still presides over the institution, and gives to it all the advantage of his wide-extended influence and well-known ability.

Besides this general society, the denomination has other organizations for the same purpose, which are designed to operate in a more local manner. Of these, are the Ministerial Associations of Worcester, West Worcester, Middlesex, and Plymouth counties, in Massachusetts; the Cheshire, in New Hampshire; and the Portland

Association in Maine; who hold semiannual meetings for the encouragement of their local Sunday Schools, and whose action is by the receiving, reading, and printing of their semiannual reports, and by addresses to parents, teachers, and children, on the subject of religious education. In Boston, the teachers meet on the third Monday of every month, under an organization called the Teachers' Social Union, for the discussion of questions which are designed to enlighten, stimulate, and encourage those who are engaged in this delightful work. .

The Sunday Schools connected with all these Associations, as well as the most of those belonging to the denomination, are in general in a healthy and prosperous condition.

In August, 1837, the "Universalist Sabbath School Association" was formed, at a public meeting held in the city of Boston; since which time Sunday Schools have been connected with most of the parishes belonging to this class of Christians. It holds an annual meeting, at which a report is read in the afternoon, and a sermon preached; and in the evening of the same day a public meeting, at which addresses are made. Besides these, it has a number of other meetings in the course of the year in various towns in the Commonwealth, for discussion and social inter-

course, which are well designed to promote the cause of this noble institution.

And now, at this moment, we are not aware of any considerable body or denomination of Christians which do not recognize the Sunday School as a regular, approved, and established means for the early religious instruction and moral culture of the young. On sufficient and accurate data, it is believed that there are now, in the United States alone, two millions of scholars connected with institutions of this kind. If we add to these one million and a half for the British empire, and a million more for all other places, — which is considered a moderate estimate, — there is a total of four and a half millions of the rising generation who at this moment are receiving, through the Sunday School, more or less knowledge of Christian principles, and, in some degree, a systematic training for the moral and religious duties of life.

This, it must be confessed, we think, is a state of things which the world has never before witnessed. In this fact we recognize a nearer fulfilment of that prophecy, than at any previous period in the history of man, by which we are taught to look for a time “when the knowledge of the Lord should cover the earth as the waters cover the sea.” It is an epoch full of the deep-

est interest alike to the Christian and the philanthropist, — one which may well encourage the hope, that humanity is at length to be redeemed from the degrading thralldom of ignorance and sin. As science is at the present time rapidly improving and elevating man's outward condition, — lessening the amount and severity of his labor, and increasing his rewards, — assuaging his pains, and multiplying his comforts, — annihilating, as it were, for his advantage, both space and time, and thus bringing him nearer and nearer to his fellow-man ; so, we trust, in the same or greater degree, is moral, religious, and intellectual culture, by the Sunday School, the common school, and other beneficent instrumentalities, to change his inward and spiritual condition, — purify or remove the many sources from around him of evil and sin, — open the fountains from which are to gush forth living waters, even the waters of eternal life, — and bring on, in the fulness of time, that true millennium, when the kingdom of righteousness shall be established in all the earth, — “ when they shall teach no more every man his neighbour, saying, Know the Lord ; for they shall all know him, from the least to the greatest.”

CHAPTER XXIII.

PRINCIPLES AND RESULTS.

THE Sunday School has for its basis the fundamental principle, that moral and religious instruction is an original and indispensable want of the child's nature ; and that other and more efficient means than parental instruction and example, and the ordinary services of the church, are requisite, in the progress of the ages, for its proper culture, education, and development. This, from the first, has obviously been its latent, if not its manifest and leading object. It is true, indeed, that a different feeling or belief is prevalent to some extent, because the first Sunday Schools by Raikes made secular or rudimental instruction a part of their plan. But this arose from the necessity of the case. As the children of the poor in England, for whom these schools were originally designed, were unable to read, it became a necessary preliminary step to teach the A, B, C, and the a, b, abs, — or, in other words, the intellectual process of reading, — before they

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could proceed to the second step, the inculcation of moral and religious truth, for the reformation of the life and manners, which was the great object and final purpose of the Sunday School.

As a visiter of prisons, Raikes early perceived that ignorance and crime were generally associated together; and accordingly he employed there the few that could, to instruct those who could not read, in order, as one of his biographers says, "that Christian principles might be more efficiently communicated." His original agreement with those he first employed as teachers was to this effect, — "that they should receive as many children as he should send upon a Sunday, whom they were to instruct in reading *and the Church Catechism*." They for whom the doors of his first schools were opened, he says, were "little wretches," who were "cursing and swearing in a manner so horrid as to convey to any serious mind an idea of hell rather than of any other place." To reform these, and such as these, — not merely by teaching them to read, but by instilling into them, after that process, good principles, moral and religious truths, the sublime precepts of the gospel, — this was the object of the founder of Sunday Schools. "The great principles," said he, "which I inculcate are, to be kind and good-natured to each other; not

to provoke one another ; to be dutiful to their parents ; not to offend God by cursing and swearing ; and such little plain precepts as all may comprehend." In another connection he expresses himself in these significant and weighty words, indicating clearly that religious instruction and its consequent effects, which sooner or later would result therefrom, were the objects which he had originally and constantly in view : — " If good seed be sown in the mind at an early period of human life, though it show not itself again for many years, it may please God at some future period to cause it to spring up, and to bring forth a plenteous harvest."

Hannah More, who, as we have seen, was among the earliest to engage in this work, and the most able to understand and explain its objects, says : — " My object is not to make fanatics, but to train up the lower classes in habits of *industry and piety*. I know no way of teaching morals but by teaching principles ; nor of inculcating Christian principles without a good knowledge of Scripture. I own I have labored this point diligently." Again, she says : — " It is my grand endeavour to make every thing as entertaining as I can ; and I try to engage their affections, to excite in them the love of God, and particularly to awaken their gratitude to their Redeemer."

The object of these schools, as stated in the circular of William Fox, the founder of the Sunday School Society in London, and the bosom friend of Raikes, was, "to prevent vice, to encourage industry and virtue, to dispel darkness and ignorance, to diffuse the light of knowledge, to bring men to obey the laws of God and their country, to lead them in the pleasant paths of religion here, and to endeavour to prepare them for a glorious eternity." The "First-Day or Sunday School Society" of Philadelphia had this object originally, perhaps, less distinctly in view than any other, and acted upon it less afterward; but nevertheless their language is, — "Whereas, among the youth of every large city, various instances occur of the first day of the week, called Sunday, — a day which ought to be devoted to religious improvement, — being employed to the worst of purposes, the depravity of morals and manners, — it is therefore the opinion of sundry persons that the establishment of Sunday Schools would be of essential advantage to the rising generation." The philanthropic Jonas Hanway, in his "Comprehensive View of Sunday Schools," says: — "The office of the master or mistress is confined to reading and *teaching Christian duties*. Writing is not of a nature to be taught there, nor would it be consistent, if it were, to be taught on the Sabbath day."

This, in fact, is the current and the concurrent testimony of all those who have engaged in the cause of Sunday Schools. In Scotland and New England, where the children had been taught to read by private or public tuition before admission to the Sunday School, it was established and used solely for religious instruction. But in England, Ireland, Wales, and in some portions of our own country, where, unfortunately, the system of free schools had not been provided, there only, and there from necessity alone, did they ever assume, to any considerable extent, a secular character. Religious instruction and moral improvement have been their predominant aim, from first to last. It has been, as it ever will be, their great purpose, by the inculcation of moral and religious truth, to restrain the evil tendencies of our nature, and to call out, develop, and give activity and a right direction to the good; to produce sorrow for sin, where sin is active or latent; to reform, where reformation is required; and to bring the whole nature of the child to act in conformity to the laws of its being and the commands of a wise and holy God.

The principles of the Sunday School, then, succinctly stated, are, — 1. That the child has a moral and a religious nature. 2. That this nature is progressive, and capable of improvement

by instruction, education, and culture. 3. That this instruction and culture, with God's blessing, is designed and fitted to enlighten, reform, improve, sanctify, and save the human soul. 4. That the Bible, and especially the New Testament, containing the divine revelations made to man by Jesus Christ, aided by teachers, manuals, and other instrumentalities, are the means by which it is to act, and accomplish its beneficent purpose. 5. That this institution is not designed to supersede the instructions of the home or the church, but to act as an auxiliary and aid to supply their unavoidable deficiencies.

Such are the principles of the Sunday School. What have been its results? Has it equalled the expectation of its friends? Is it a valuable institution, and worthy of continuance, unceasing labor, and support?

Raikes shall give the first answer. The neighbourhood from which were taken the first little wretches who came to receive the benefits of his instructions was made, by their profane, vulgar, and riotous conduct, a place which would convey to any serious mind an idea of hell, as sometimes described, rather than of any other region. After the lapse of about three years, he says that he had been told, some time previous, by a woman who lived in a lane where he had

fixed a school, "that the place was a heaven, compared to what it used to be." Again, he says, — "Some of the vilest boys are now so exemplary, that I have taken one into my own service." The celebrated Joseph Lancaster once called on Raikes. "I was naturally desirous of gaining information and instruction from a venerable man, who had in a series of years superintended the education of three thousand poor children in Sunday Schools; who had been actively engaged in visiting both the city and country prisons, whereby he had gained an ample opportunity of knowing if any of the scholars were brought in as prisoners; and who, on appealing to his memory, which, although at an advanced age, is strong and lively, could answer — *none!*"

Giving an account of his first anniversary, he says: — "Young people, lately more neglected than the cattle in the field, — ignorant, profane, filthy, clamorous, impatient of every restraint, — were here seen cleanly, quiet, observant of order, submissive, courteous in behaviour and conversation, free from that vileness which marks the wretched vulgar. The inhabitants of the town bear testimony to this change in their manners; and that it was not the appearance of a day, but a character fairly stated."

We have the testimony as to results, also, of

Hannah More. "We had," she states, "a great number there who could only tell their letters when they begun, and can already read the Testament, and not only say the catechism, but give pertinent answers to any questions which involve the first principles of Christianity." "Bless the Lord for the past progress of Christianity in that region of darkness, where many have been brought to 'know the truth as it is in Jesus.'" At another place where she had labored, "considered so ferocious that no constable would venture there to execute his office," the change wrought at the end of two years is thus attested by a magistrate, — "that the two sessions and the two assizes were past, and the third approaching, and neither as prosecutor nor prisoner, plaintiff nor defendant, had any of that parish (before so notorious for crimes and litigations) appeared. Warrants for wood-stealing and other pilfering were becoming quite out of fashion."

It was stated to a committee of the House of Commons by persons conversant with Sunday Schools, "that they had never known one of the pupils to become a beggar." Another fact of a different nature is thus stated. "In one Sunday School Union, that of Newcastle, Eng., of 2,243 teachers, *eight hundred and seventy-two had been taught in their schools*; and *twelve hundred*

and nineteen were members of Christian churches." "A committee of the House of Commons ascertained, by an examination of the prisons in London, in which seven hundred children from eight to sixteen were confined, that only *two* had ever been in a Sunday School." The Recorder of London stated, that not more than one out of a thousand juvenile delinquents brought before him had ever been favored with Sunday School instruction."

"In Ireland," says a respectable secular journal, "where iniquity almost exults in its tremendous infinity, it has been ascertained, that, of all those youth who have attended the Sabbath School, not one has been known to be arraigned in a case of criminal prosecution." "Of 150,000," said a speaker at a New York anniversary, who had given much attention to the subject, "who had received instruction under the direction of the Hibernian Sunday School Society, not one had ever been convicted of crime; and that of all the convicts at Botany Bay, one only had ever been a Sunday School scholar."

"Wherever Sunday Schools exist to any extent," say the committee for Sunday Schools in Ireland, "the neighbourhood is peaceable, the Sabbath respected and observed, public worship is more numerously and reverently attended, the

Holy Scriptures have become the valued inmate of houses where they hitherto were unknown, family prayer has been established, and the hour of sickness and sorrow has been cheered by the light of divine truth."

In Wales, a writer observes, — "All ages attended the Sabbath Schools, and such had been the delightful effects in one district of that country, that the jailer had actually nothing to do; and for want of prisoners to attend to, he had gone out to cultivate potatoes in the fields."

The result in Scotland, effected by their general system of education, which was mostly of a religious character, is so singularly striking and remarkable, that we cannot deny ourselves the satisfaction of repeating it here. In 1694, that is, two years before the enactment of the statute providing elementary schools for all the people, it is stated as an historical fact, that, besides a great number of poor families very meanly provided for by the church boxes, and others, who from bad food fall into disease, two hundred thousand of the people were begging from door to door; and that licentiousness and misery were the most obvious characteristics of the largest portion of the population. In 1800, Dr. Curran affirmed, that these schools had been so corrective in their character that there was no country in Europe in

which, in proportion to its population, so small a number of persons fell under the prosecution of the common law as in Scotland. At this day, there is no people who stand higher than they in a moral and religious point of view.

In Austria and Germany, the same results are to be noticed. Kindermaun established Sunday Schools in 1773 in Bohemia. At first, there were but fourteen thousand out of a population of two hundred thousand who received this instruction. But in 1789 they reckoned nearly one hundred and sixty thousand out of two hundred and fifty thousand. "Crime," it is stated, "began immediately to diminish, which led to the establishment of similar schools in other parts of Austria, and different kingdoms of Germany. The result was, that from 1789 to 1798 there were only 765 criminals. In the ten years previous, there were 1523 criminals, which exhibits a diminution of crimes by more than one half."

In America the result has been the same. Of the Sunday School at Portsmouth, N. H., it is said, — "The effect on society was visible in less than four years. Children, who at the beginning had been received squalid and ignorant, and who would have remained so, had gradually been led to become careful and thoughtful; while those who came at first better prepared,

from their domestic relations, had been carried onward faster and further than they would have been by any merely domestic instructions." Of 191 teachers who had been connected with this school, up to the year 1843, *eighty-three* had been pupils of the school.

The testimony given in this work by the superintendent of a school in this city is equally decisive and confirmatory. More than one thousand children had been received into that school since its establishment, a register of which had been carefully kept. Most of them from childhood were subjected to the temptations of a city life, where, for the most part, they were born, and where most of them had continued to reside; and of the whole number one only, and that for a minor offence, had been brought to the bar for actual trial, and he had been in the school but for a short period; and of whom there were only one or two who had forfeited the confidence and respect of friends by any known departure from moral obligations or religious duties.

Sunday Schools, therefore, or that which they symbolize, religious education and instruction, seem to be the true remedy and cure provided by Providence for latent and overt vice and crime. By the salutary and lasting impressions which they make, implanting the seeds of morality and

religion, the principles of virtue and the highest human excellence, in the minds and hearts of the young, we are adopting the surest methods by which to qualify them to become the best of citizens, and the heirs of a happy immortality.

These principles and results are confirmed by the opinions of some of the wisest and best men whose names adorn our nation's calendar.

Bushrod Washington, who adorned the judicial seat which he so long and honorably occupied, says : — “ That Heaven may prosper the benevolent work in which the Sunday School Union is engaged, so honorable to them and so beneficial to our country, and to those particularly who are the objects of their solicitude, is the ardent prayer of their faithful friend and admirer.”

The opinion of Chief Justice Marshall, a name which needs no heralding for either continent, is expressed in these words : — “ I beg you to believe that no person estimates more highly than I do the purity of motives by which the members of these schools are actuated, or the value of the objects which they seek to attain. I cannot be more perfectly convinced than I am ‘ that virtue and intelligence are the basis of our independence, and the conservative principles of national and individual happiness ’ ; nor can any person believe more firmly that the institution

you patronize is devoted to the protection of both."

Daniel Webster is another name, the opinion and judgment of whom on any question must ever command unqualified respect and profound consideration. In a reported address of his on the subject, he has said of Sunday Schools, — "There were other plans of benevolence about which men might differ. But it seemed to him, there could be no danger of error here. If we were sure of any thing, we were sure of this, that the knowledge of their Creator, their duty, and their destiny, is good to men; and that whatever, therefore, draws the attention of the young to the consideration of those objects, and enables them to feel their importance, must be advantageous to human happiness in the highest degree, and in all worlds. In the great wants of their moral nature, all men are alike. All men were born in want of culture, in want of knowledge, in want of something to explain to them not only what they may see around them, but their own nature, condition, and destiny. In civilized times, and in a Christian land, the means of this knowledge were to be supplied to the young by parental care, by public provision, and Christian benevolence. He was most happy to concur in this object."

CHAPTER XXIV.

ORGANIZATION AND CLASSIFICATION OF SUNDAY SCHOOLS, GENERAL EXERCISES, COURSE OF INSTRUCTION, AND PRINCIPLES OF TEACHING.

ORGANIZATION.

THE simplest is always the best plan for the organization of a Sunday School. Those who are to be its teachers, in any given case, should meet and form themselves into an association. The pastor, as superintendent *ex officio*, should preside at its meetings. A few rules and regulations may and should be drawn up. A superintendent (and, if need be, an assistant), a secretary, and a librarian should be chosen. Teachers' meetings should be provided for, to be held as often, at least, as once a month, and oftener where it is practicable. The teachers should be furnished with class-books, and the superintendent required to keep a register or record-book. In these should be entered the names of all the pupils and teachers, noting the time of their ad-

mission to and departure from the school. If the teachers' class-books are faithfully kept, the superintendent will be enabled to do this correctly, and with little trouble. The pastor and superintendent must be the life and soul of this simple machinery, — breathing into it continually new elements of motive and action, by suggestions and remarks at all their meetings, by words of kindness and encouragement to pupils and teachers, by fidelity and earnestness on their own part, so as to overcome all sluggishness, inconstancy, or faltering on the part of others.

CLASSIFICATION.

In classifying a Sunday School, where, for the most part, as in our own country, the advantages and the general education of the children are nearly equal, *age* will be the easiest, and, in most cases, as good a principle of classification as any that can be adopted; from four to six years of age in the first, from six to eight in the second class, and so on. There will always be exceptions to any rule, and these it must be the care of the superintendent to adjust and regulate.

The best number for a class is *five*. It is never well to have less than four, and usually six or seven will be found too many. As absences will occur, from time to time, the former number will

be found too small, and insufficient to secure a proper degree of interest, either for teacher or pupils. And as, at times, all may be, and often are, present, six or seven are more than one teacher can well control or instruct in the pews or seats devoted to them in a Sunday School.

GENERAL EXERCISES.

Every pupil and teacher should be furnished with a service-book, including hymns. The school should be opened with singing, in which, while standing, all, if possible, should unite. The children having now been seated, this first exercise should be followed by the Scripture lesson, using the service-book, which should be read responsively by the whole school, following the superintendent. A prayer should follow from the same book, the pupils standing and repeating each petition after the superintendent.

To these general exercises should be added, at this point of time, a lesson to the whole school, from the pastor, superintendent, or from a teacher, or any other person present, properly qualified and prepared. If remarks constituting such an exercise are not extended beyond five minutes, or if something only be read, suitably selected, occupying but about the same time, this general lesson is so useful, by conveying to every mind.

in the school one and the same idea, at one and the same time, that it should not be wholly omitted, unless there is some insuperable obstacle to its preparation and delivery. In these general lessons, study variety in the subjects, present them graphically, and be short.

Altogether, these general exercises need not, and should not, occupy more than one third of the time allotted for the school hour. The lessons in the classes should then follow, occupying the remainder of the time, after which the school should be closed by singing another hymn, or by the use of the Lord's Prayer.

COURSE OF INSTRUCTION.

It is assumed here, as a matter of course, that all our schools, as at present constituted, will use manuals. Many objections have been urged, of late, to the use of these in Sunday, as well as other, schools. It is very true that manuals may be, and often are, abused. But it is equally true, as experience has proved, that they may be used successfully and without abuse. They certainly have their advantages. They connect the Sunday School with the fireside and the home. They call the attention of the parent, from week to week, to a coöperation with the teacher, which otherwise might be neglected. They

prepare, too, the mind of each child to appreciate the remarks and conversation of their teacher on the subject which he has selected from their lesson. They often and firmly fix the greatest truths and divinest principles in the mind of the child, to be called up, sooner or later, and applied to conduct and character. These are some of their advantages. But they may be and are abused, when the teacher not only leans, but depends, upon them wholly or chiefly ; when they restrict the intercourse of teacher and pupil to question and answer ; and when they supersede investigation and reflection on the part of the teacher. We trust that, at the present day, the right use of the manual is the rule, and the abuse only the exception. If in this we are mistaken, the error cannot be too early corrected.

The following plan of instruction (taking the manuals of one denomination of Christians for the sake of illustration), if followed out by placing them successively in the hands of each member of any given class, will provide a systematic course of Christian instruction, and a generous share of religious knowledge.

1. The First Book for Sunday Schools ; Elements of Christian Morality. Hymns.
2. The Catechism of the Worcester Association.

3. Gallaudet's Book of the Soul. Two Parts.
4. Bible Geography. Parley's or Worcester's.
5. Allen's or Cartee's Questions. First Part.
6. Scripture Catechism, by Rev. E. Peabody.
- Cartee's Questions. Second Part.
7. Huntington on the Parables.
8. Bible Biography.
9. Allen's Questions. Third Part.
10. Paley's Natural Theology.
11. Wayland's Moral Science.
12. Evidences of Christianity.
13. Expositions of the Old and New Testament.

We add a more elaborate and perfect course of instruction, which is recommended by the Sunday School Society, and is here copied from one of their Annual Reports.

"A complete course of instruction for a Sunday School would embrace the following branches of study; and, so far as circumstances may permit, the children should be carried through such a course, by beginning at the earliest age at which they enter the school with the first of these exercises, and leading them on successively to the last. It may be impossible to introduce or to maintain such an order of instruction, but the classes might be arranged and taught with reference to it.

“ I. Hymns and Sacred Poetry ;

Passages of Scripture to be committed to memory.

“ II. Conversation between the teacher and the children, — on

“ The spiritual nature of the child ;

“ His relations to God ;

“ His relations to his fellow-beings ;

“ The dispositions that should be cherished ;

“ The tempers that should be repressed ;

“ The habits of speech and action that are proper or improper.

“ Such conversation would bring up various topics that fall under the general titles of faith and character. It should follow very much the direction given it by the child, who should be encouraged to ask questions, and not be suffered to remain a passive listener. Advantage may be taken of familiar incidents, of the occurrences of the week, or of facts borrowed from biography. Abstract teaching should be avoided, and truth be taught by illustration and narrative.

“ Catechisms may be used in this stage of the instruction. The best, probably, are Dr. Carpenter's, that prepared by Dr. Channing and Mr. Thatcher, and that published by the Worcester Association.

“ III. History of Jesus Christ.

“In its principal facts only, without entering into criticism ; using the New Testament as the only text-book ; presenting to the child the Saviour’s life and character in a manner suitable to his early age.

“IV. Notices of the principal personages of the Old Testament.

“The teacher may here give his class some brief account of Abraham, Moses, David, &c., with the story of Joseph, and other narratives which they would comprehend, and in which they might be expected to take an interest.

“V. Lessons from Nature and Providence.

“These may be given orally, but should be more systematic and extended than those which come under No. II. They should afford illustrations of the divine power, wisdom, and goodness, as seen in ‘the things that are made’ ; of the divine government, as exhibited in the course of events ; of human life and character, as displayed in biography and history. Many of the facts of natural science might be profitably introduced.

“VI. History of Jesus Christ, — in full.

“The Gospels should now be carefully read and explained. The life of Jesus should be studied by means of a Harmony, — Palfrey’s, for example ; his miracles, parables, and other discourses should be separately examined ; and

pains be taken to give the class as full an insight as may be into the character of Christ. Such a book as Ware's 'Life of the Saviour' may be used; and the teacher should prepare himself by the help of commentaries and other works elucidating the meaning of Scripture.

"VII. Old Testament.

"Its history and biography;

"The Jewish Law;

"The devotional and prophetical books.

"Portions of these several parts of the Old Testament may be read and explained, and some general views be given of the Mosaic dispensation, and the course of ancient prophecy. Perhaps nothing more can be attempted in a Sunday School.

"VIII. History of the early spread of Christianity, as related in the book of the Acts.

"IX. The Epistles of the New Testament.

"Portions of these may be read, and the design and plan of each Epistle be briefly explained, according to the method recommended and adopted by Locke.

"X. Principles and duties of religion.

"The teacher may now give moral and religious instruction in forms suitable rather to youth than to childhood. He should explain the foundation and the elements of duty; should make

clear the nature and propriety of faith ; should show what piety is, its excellence, and the means by which it may be cherished ; what morality is, its origin and authority ; what the Christian character is, how it may be acquired and strengthened. Such a book as Ware's 'Formation of the Christian Character,' or the third part of the Geneva Catechism, may be taken into the school, but it is better that the instruction should be given in conversation.

" XI. Doctrines of Christianity, — absolutely.

" The teacher may exhibit and illustrate the doctrines of the Christian faith, as he understands them, without any notice of other opinions ; his object being to give his class a view of the religious belief of a Christian, as he gathers it from the Bible.

" XII. Doctrines of Christianity, — controversially examined.

" The object is this ; the final part of the course would be twofold, — to *prove* the justice of the statements made under the last head, and to show the erroneous nature of opinions which may have gained currency. This, however, should be done with great discretion, and with a view to relieve the mind of the pupil of difficulties with which it may be embarrassed, and not make him either dogmatical or sectarian.

"If, after leaving the Sunday School, the children should attend a course of exercises with their minister on the following subjects, they would at its close have been carried through a thorough course of religious instruction : — Evidences of Christianity ; Natural Religion ; Sacred Geography ; Moral Philosophy ; Ecclesiastical History ; History of Religions."

PRINCIPLES OF TEACHING.

It is not our purpose here and now to exhaust this subject, nor to enter very far even into its simpler elements. All we propose is, to suggest a few of the most obvious and important principles in the management and instruction of a Sunday School, or of a Sunday School class.

1. The first principle we suggest is that of Mrs. Hannah More. "It is my great endeavour," she says, "to make every thing as entertaining [interesting ?] as I can, and try to engage their affections ; to excite in them the love of God, and particularly to awaken their gratitude to their Redeemer. I have never tried the system of terror, because I have found that kindness produces a better end by better means." This is a golden rule ; it should pervade the hearts of both superintendents and teachers, and give a

character to the proceedings and lessons of the entire school.

2. No teacher or pupil, unless from some unusual cause, should leave his class during the school hour. Nothing is more fatal to the order of the school, or the object at which it aims, — religious feeling and impression, — than a deviation from this rule. The library, which is the usual cause for its neglect, should be so managed as to render this unnecessary. The books should be delivered at a separate hour, or selected by the librarian from numbers placed on a card prepared for the purpose, and given in by the pupils before the commencement of the exercises; and the books thus selected, distributed by him at the close of the school.

3. The lessons for the classes should invariably be short.

4. The pupils of a class should be always so classified and kept together by their teacher, that each and all should have one and the same manual, — one and the same lesson.

5. Simplicity is another important rule. Affect no solemnity or seriousness which is not felt, nor endeavour to teach that which you do not know. Let your language and thoughts be simple and much in detail, but not childish. Be

natural, unaffected, sincere, and truthful in deportment, looks, expression, feelings, and action.

6. Strive to obtain and manifest a deep love for the spiritual welfare of the child ; remembering ever that it has a soul ; that it is exposed to various temptations ; that it may be perverted, corrupted, and lost. This affectionate solicitude will appear in your countenance, and to the eye of the child will have a charm sufficient to secure for you its deepest attention.

7. Never go to your class unprepared. The lesson of the day should be the subject of careful inquiry and study on some day or hour previous to that on which you are to give it. The spirit of devotion is so necessary to a successful teacher, that to go from the closet to the class is another kind of preparation which no good teacher would willingly neglect.

8. Beside the necessary explanations, make it a point to impress, if possible, *one idea* on the hearts of your pupils at every lesson. One idea, simplified and brought home forcibly to their convictions and tender consciences, is sufficient for one day. By simplifying your duty for each lesson to this degree, the labor of a teacher is made comparatively light ; for no one can feel, that to master one idea, one Christian truth, one religious principle, so as to converse upon it well,

having a whole week for preparation, can be a burdensome or difficult duty.

9. The principle of imitation can be turned to good account in a Sunday School. This was one of Haven's cherished principles. "Be what you would have your pupils to be. Feel as you would have them to feel. Be earnest in the cause of religion, if you would have them to be earnest. Children judge more from the eye and the tone of voice than from words. If we do not feel ourselves, we can never make them feel."

10. Aim at the formation of character. Truths and principles are the seeds of all action. Instruction, therefore, the communication of knowledge, religious as well as any other, is indispensable. But rest not satisfied with reaching the understanding. Awaken, train, purify, and elevate the affections. Teach your pupils early and firmly to control their feelings, and to deny their appetites. "Out of the heart are the issues of life." In this way your lessons will have a present effect, and help to form a practical and enduring character.

11. Love, or benevolence, is the all-prevailing, the redeeming principle of the gospel. Possess and use it yourselves, and endeavour by every possible means to awaken it in the hearts of your pupils. Jesus is the model of this, as of every

other holy principle. Teach them to love every good object, and every good thing. Teach them to love God supremely, and all men as their brethren.

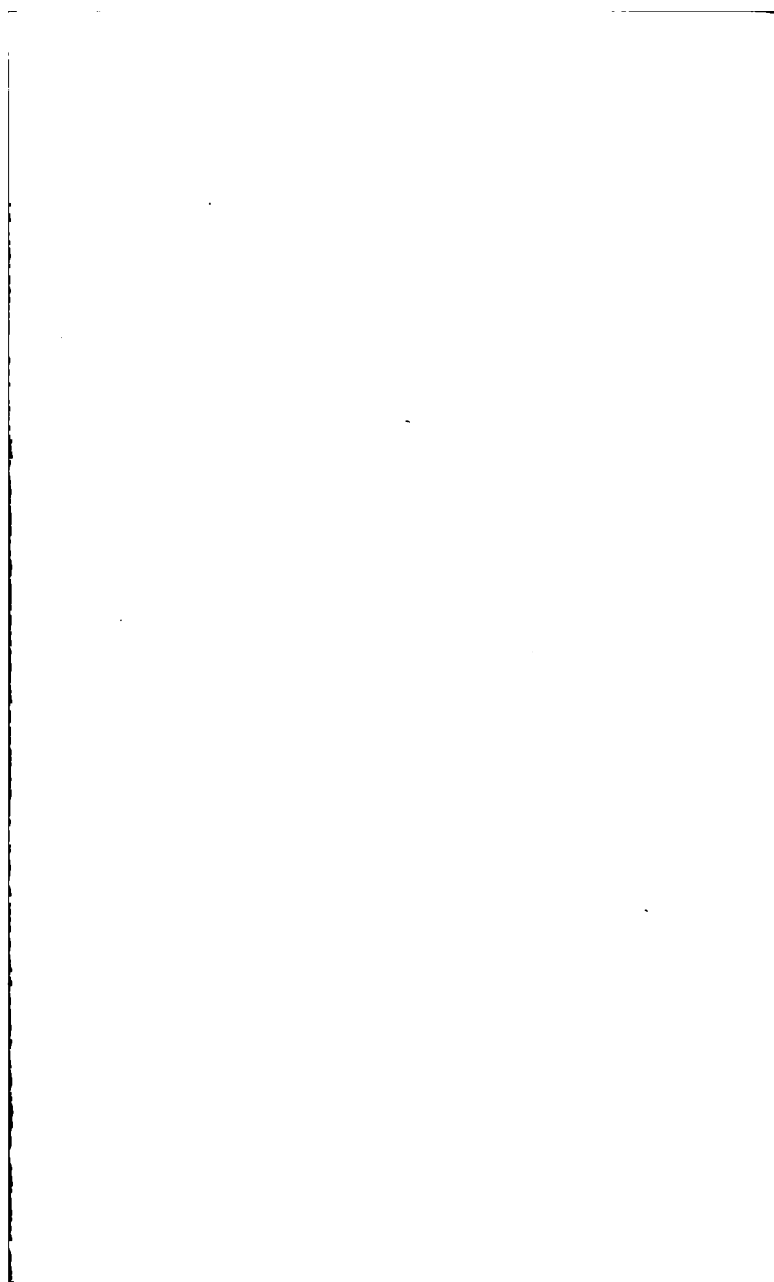
12. Prayer is a means as well as the language of piety. Teach and encourage your pupils, therefore, affectionately to engage in this exercise, that they may obtain true piety. When they have secured this, they will not fail to pray.

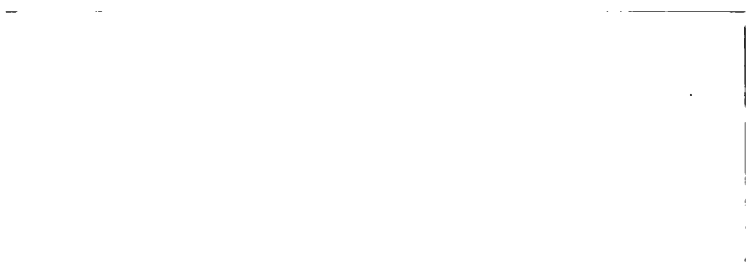
13. Faith is an indispensable prerequisite in the work of education; faith in the nature of the child as a being who is capable of receiving, and of improving by, instruction; faith in the power of instruction itself, — that no seed sown and watered can fail to germinate, grow, and bring forth fruit, sooner or later; faith that God, as he has promised, will give the increase, an abundant increase, where the husbandman is wise and faithful, and uses with discretion and industry all his opportunities and means.

And here we leave our self-imposed and interesting work, supplicating for it the blessing and favor of Heaven; — believing that if Sunday Schools shall be extended and sustained by the wise and benevolent, conducted on sound principles and by faithful teachers, and nourished by the prayers and labors of the Church, hereafter

the triumphs of the gospel will be rapidly accelerated, that Christian truth must have free course and be glorified, and that He whose right it is shall finally reign, and his will be done on earth, as it now is, and ever will be, done in heaven.

THE END.





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